IN/APPROPRIATE EDUCATION IN A TIME OF MASS EXTINCTION: COMPOSING A METHODOLOGICAL IMBROGLIO OF LOVE AND GRIEF

A DISSERTATION
by
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Abstract

IN/APPROPRIATE EDUCATION IN A TIME OF MASS EXTINCTION: COMPOSING A METHODOLOGICAL IMBROGLIO OF LOVE AND GRIEF

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This qualitative, transdisciplinary, process-relational, autoecographic, and arts-informed study considers the meaning of education as the Sixth Great Extinction unfolds, when human activity is radically changing planetary systems, including the climate, causing alarming declines in biodiversity, and calling into question the viability of the human species. Educational institutions appear unwilling and/or unable to meaningfully respond to our multiple cascading eco-cultural crises. Despite significant paradigmatic changes in science and philosophy in the past century, and ample scientific evidence of multiple systemic degradations to the planet, educational leaders barely, if at all, acknowledge the import of changes happening around/because of us; educational institutions largely continue to reproduce an outmoded, now perilous worldview that is destabilizing conditions for life. Pondering the significance of this educational inertia and disconnection—in tandem with the late Thomas Berry's (1999) call to "reinvent the human at the species level" (p. 159)—leads to my central question: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?*

An emergent, experimental and blended meta-methodology co-arises as conceptual score—a *hermeneutics of becoming*—that borrows elements from phenomenological,

poststructural, dialogical, and alchemical hermeneutics; as well as autoecographic, poïetic/poetic, a/r/tographic, and expressive arts enquiry. Leaning into concepts that emerge from process-relational philosophy as the basis of an enquiry into image and meaning—I hermeneutically engage multiple "texts," broadly conceived to include words/language, ideas, elder professors, the more-than-human, place, art, dreams, and personal story.

One of the central features of this enquiry *became* a daylong research encounter that involved a focus group/hermeneutic circle of ten university professors, all in the process of retiring. These ten professors, coming from a variety of disciplines, engaged in an expressive arts practice of mask-making, after which they entered into an extended dialogue, indirectly addressing the research question. A major generative theme to emerge from this art-making and dialogue was *in/appropriateness*—which then rhizomatically and poïetically generated new insight, image, and interpretation.

Many findings flow from this encounter. They also arise from—and are presented by—meditations on *theoria, praxis* and *poïesis*, as embodied in essay, poetry, and art. These essays unfold as a "musical score"—in eight movements, plus interludes, cadenza and coda. Throughout a process of encounter and expression, I explore the relationship of love and grief as constituent of human resistances to and/or motivations for change; how this relationship plays out in our mis/education systems and mis/conceptions of educational leadership; as well as how it might be key to transpositions and the re/development of an eco-cosmological consciousness the human.

Acknowledgements

It would be inappropriate to claim this work as my own. My appreciation, gratitude and love run deep—deeper than I am able to reach for words. Let me try. There are so many to thank—those living—and living in the light—mentors, colleagues, friends and family—who've travelled with me, providing inspiration, critical and creative insight, generous support, radical trust, and sustaining love. Deepest gratitude to my patient, dedicated, hard-working & affirmative guides, my committee, who challenged my thinking, appreciated the aesthetic and deviant, and believed in the im/possible: Sally Atkins, Kelly Clark/Keefe, Sandra Lubarsky, and Vachel Miller. Special thanks to Vachel, my chair and critical friend, who shared plenty and precious time; whose support and encouragement never wavered; who modeled *eutrapelia* and grace, and who, through presence and practice—and the practice of presence—unknowingly helped me theorize *amor mentoris*. Thanks to my participants for their generous time, stories, critical insights, belly laughs, and appreciation for the silences—and most of all, for giving me tools and courage to explore the in/appropriate and radical imagination. To my teachers/mentors Marlene De Nardo and Paula Koepke, who walked through the redwoods and talked with me about becoming-radical educators in a time of mass extinction. To Jim Killacky for welcoming me into the program, for lending support and care. To the Appalachian's Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership for travel support. To Susan Musilli for wise practical counsel and *HELP!* To Sharron Grimes and Holly Hirst, my readers in the graduate school. To Cohort 17—Jodi, Don, Wayne, Jed, Arshad, Robin, Cama and Lisa, who helped me incubate my question—especially Emily Miller—who ran the

length with me—Cheetah-woman to my Turtle. To many critical friends, collaborators, and conspirators, especially *Team Rosi*: Lisa McNeal, Jessica Gilway, Vachel, Kelly, and Emily; and *Core Four*: Katrina Plato, Emily and Sally. To Katrina, Lisa, and Rosa Dargan-Powers for invaluable expert support for encounter. To the Process Group for Wednesday night discussions, which deepened my understanding & appreciation for Process thought: Frankie, Jay, Kelly, Sally, Sandra, and Marcus Ford. Thanks to Jay Wentworth, who first introduced Whitehead & Process philosophy to me; who read and reflected with me, gave valuable feedback, and encouraged poetry. To Pete and Mary MacDowell for critical conversations, and being real. Gratitude to the late Thomas Berry, who encouraged me to dream with the Earth and participate in the Great Work. To Joanna Macy who gave me models for exploring grief, anger, fear and cosmic emptiness–and for active hope in the Great Turning. Thanks most of all to my amazing kids, who grew from 'tweens to young adults in the time it took me to become-Dr. Soose. This work is for you and your friends. Deepest gratitude to/for my life-partner, soul mate, *anam cara*, Frankie Kelly, without whom I could never have done this work—on so many levels. For the hours of deep dialogue, piles of laundry, chauffeuring, shouldering, comforting—oh, yeah—and reading! To Cameron Dennis for lending his expertise to the cause, creating lovely photos of participants' masks. To the generous artists who allowed me to create-with their images. To my sister, Josephine Reed, who knows the ropes and hoops and helped in my time of need! To Bro'Bear ♥. To John Scarlata and Mary Boyer, for showing how to be courageous and dignified and wholly conscious in the face of death, as I contemplated extinctions. To my first teachers, my mother, Frances, father, Tully; and my sister, Katie, who sustained me with loving presence from the Great Beyond. To my friends—especially my *ya-ya* sisters—who've patiently been waiting for me to say, *Yes, I can!* To all the others I've failed to mention, I'm sure, to whom I own a deep bow….

Dedication

To all that has perished and is perishing that we Grieve

To Love that endures, and the Love yet to become

To the Cosmic and Quantum

To the Elders and Wise Fools among us

To my children, Oisín and Rhiannon—

and to all the children becoming—

the two- and four-legged,

the crawling and creeping ones,

the winged and finned,

furry and shelled,

rooted and leaved,

barked and spiked,

the budded, blossomed—

and not yet blossomed…

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(A forecast of flows, or not-quite-an-outline[1])

[1] An **outline**, also called a hierarchical outline, is a list arranged to show hierarchical relationships and is a type of tree structure.

List of Figures and Figurations

The only [dissertation] that is worth writing is the one we don't have the courage or strength to write. (Cixous, 1994, p. 32)

If you don't want to dissolve in your own seriousness to the point where you become ridiculous to everyone, you must have a healthy awareness of your own human ridiculousness and nothingness. As a matter of fact, the more serious what you are doing is, the more important it becomes not to lose this awareness. If you lose this, your own actions - paradoxically - lose their seriousness. A human action becomes genuinely important when it springs from the soil of a clear-sighted awareness of the temporality and ephemerality of everything human. It is only this awareness that can breathe any greatness into an action. The outlines of genuine meaning can only be perceived from the bottom of absurdity. (Havel, 1990, p. 113)

Prelude to a Quest/ion: Beginning in the Middle of Love and Grief

I began my journey as a doctoral student in educational leadership in 2009, right on the heels of the 2008 financial crash that initiated the so-called Great Recession, with devastating consequences that continue to reverberate through both micro- and macro-cultures, economies, and ecologies worldwide. Some suggest further and inevitable economic destabilization is yet to come, and/or that the end of capitalism looms (e.g., Klein, 2014). Indeed, predictions and warnings of a destabilized and even collapsing economy—inevitably linked to our finite world (even apart from concerns for a changing climate)—have been with us, largely unheeded, for many decades, such as Meadows and the Club of Rome report, The Limits to Growth (1972):

> A decision to do nothing [to limit growth] is a decision to increase the risk of [economic, cultural and ecological] collapse. We cannot say with certainty how much longer mankind [sic] can postpone initiating deliberate control of his growth before he will have lost the chance for control. (p. 183)

In a general election year, "Hope for Change"—that so many of us yearned and still yearn for—faded (fated/designed?) to become the short-lived campaign slogan or "brand" it was crafted to be at the time. In place of change, the crashing of the economy by Wall Street bankers and others in the global financial and corporate sectors became the central motif, or perhaps excuse, for governing and budgeting (in a certain way) from 2008. In parallel with a bailout of banks by governments came excuses for implementing and extending, in effect, structural adjustments to the public sector in the United States and Europe. Similar neoliberal policies paralyzed and privatized many sectors and institutions in the so-called developing

world from the 1980s. These austerity strategies entailed the further drastic pruning back of an already well-tattered commons. Rather than initiating a sustained and determined effort to transform a diseased economy, "The Crash" had the æffect of simultaneously further entrenching and diverting attentions from the unjust and unsustainable system at its core, including:

- the opposing-sounding, yet actually symbiotic ideologies—neoconservatism and neoliberalism;
- seamless extension of war from one presidency and one party to another;
- continued consolidation and expansion of the surveillance state;
- accelerating the upward rush of capital[1] to the wealthiest among us, or "the one percent"; and
- increasing and accelerating privatization of all-things-public—including, notably, education.

Woven into the worn fabric of these entrenched and interconnected ideological patterns were soaring unemployment, increasing poverty, hunger, and homelessness; the re-surfacing of deeply embedded racism; an intensifying (some say cynically manufactured) educational "crisis"; and continued desecration of the biosphere, and unfolding climate emergency.

While the economy went into a tailspin in 2008, I was completing a postgraduate certificate in expressive arts, and had begun to discern whether or not to continue in

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[1] Hardoon and Oxfam International (2015, January 19) report: In 2014, the richest 1% of people in the world owned 48% of global wealth, leaving just 52% to be shared between the other 99% of adults on the planet.1 Almost all of that 52% is owned by those included in the richest 20%, leaving just 5.5% for the remaining 80% of people in the world. If this trend continues of an increasing wealth share to the richest, the top 1% will have more wealth than the remaining 99% of people in just two years. (p. 1)

academia, with an eye toward expressive arts and education. After having spent a number of years working outside traditional job or career parameters—in part, simultaneously caring for my elderly mother and two children (by 2009, eleven and fourteen years of age), as well as recovering from breast cancer—I felt/heard a new vocational[2] pull. Raising children in a time of mass extinction meant that I had become extra-attuned to the contemporary educational landscape. It is probably not insignificant that I have education "in my blood," having had maternal grandparents, father, and, now, husband, all teachers. Moreover, I had come to surmise that our most pressing concerns all proceeded from a failure of education—not in the threadbare sense of failing to prepare students for the "global economy" or "21st Century Skills," for instance, by "No Child Left Behind" or "Race to the Top"—but a failure or even malignancy deep at the heart of our educational paradigm—a paradigm founded on a broken cosmology, servile to a delusional economy, and vulnerable to authoritarianism. The opportunity to contemplate and address with others the big picture of educational leadership and philosophy in such fragile times more than offset my principled disapproval, yet relatively minor inconvenience of having to take the GRE. And so, with great encouragement of a mentor/friend and support from my family, I resolved to "bloom where planted," here in the place I've known for most of my life in southern Appalachia. I applied in February and was accepted in March at the local university[3].

In conjunction with the volatile socio-political and economic context of my journey's

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[2] *vocation* (n.) ~ early 15 c., "spiritual calling," from Latin *vocationem* (nominative *vocatio*), literally "a calling," from *vocatus* "called," past participle of *vocare* "to call" (see voice (n.)).

[3] A few days after I wrote this, I visited my old friend, philosopher, theologian and ethicist, Richard Humphrey, formerly department chair of philosophy and religion at Appalachian, and currently president of the Oxford Graduate School in Dayton, TN, where a banner hangs over the school's entrance that says, *"Study locally, Change globally."*

initiation, other consequential events were rearranging my immediate, personal world. While the orientation to the doctoral program fell on a Friday in June, my totally dependent, mentally ill mother, for whom I had been caring intimately for more than a dozen years, had died on Monday of that same week; her memorial was held on Thursday. (Her ashes still rest near my desk on my bookshelf, contained in the clay urn I made for her before her death.) At 94, Thomas, my friend and mentor for over twenty years (whom you will encounter in these pages) had passed the preceding week. I did not have the language then, but knew instinctively that, as Braidotti says, "Death is the ultimate transposition, though it is not final" (2006, p. 232).

I went from the supremely material/spiritual and personal caring and concerns for the dying and dead—to the intensities of learning, thinking and writing with theory—too often, in disembodied ways—in a cramped, often stifling seminar room on the university campus, just meters away from where I had gone to primary school over 40 years earlier. Alongside educational theory, I contemplated deeply troubling current events, such as the nightmarish "Deepwater Horizon" spill, whence a devastating 4.9 million barrels (more than 200 million gallons) of oil bled into the Gulf of Mexico after a rig contracted to BP exploded on April 20, 2010. The spill was ongoing for 89 days; that is 2.2 to 2.6 million gallons spilled per day (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, 2014, para. 2). Along with the loss of eleven human lives, according to Terry Tempest Williams (2010), more than 400 species of wildlife were threatened by the spill. Untold numbers of animals suffered and perished—often violently and painfully, as did surely the sea turtles and dophins caught in the "411 controlled burns on the surface of the sea" (para 4). Endangered marine life included "plankton to whales, dolphins, sea turtles, tuna, and shrimp; dozens of species of birds, including brown pelicans

and piping plovers; land animals such as the gray fox and white-tailed deer; and amphibians, the alligator, and the snapping turtle" (para. 5).

I could not know at the portentous beginning of my course, that death would remain in such close proximity throughout my studies, creating a long arc of loss of beloved friends to cancers and suicide over these five plus years. These deaths—in tandem with a distressing awareness of the violence being inflicted (often for profit) upon multispecies communities around the world—served to focus a long-held concern, Death on a much larger scale—planetary, in fact—and from which emerged my central question: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?* For that matter, I thought, what does it mean to research and write, teach and lead, or to parent, create—make art or make love—to be human or even posthuman—*in a time of mass extinction?* How do I contemplate this question without going apocalyptic (Haraway, quoting D. B. Rose, 2009)—or, indeed, apoplectic? How are our "embodied existences intimately imbricated" by and with weather and climate that is "of us, in us and through us" (Neimanis & Walker, 2013, p. 2)? Furthermore, how are these embodied imbrications entangled with and by layerings of all the attendant feeling/emotional responses or unresponses (repressed responses) to extinction and climate turmoil (i.e., fear, heartbreak, grief, etc.) that is also of us, in us and through us? How does contemplating "the end of snow" (Fox, 2014) impinge on our imaginations, our souls? Borrowing from philosopher James Hatley (2012), what does it mean to be human, "… if [we] cannot be named through [our] relationship with blue whales and brown bears, wakerobin and stonewort, chrysanthemum and willow" (p. 5)? How are these relationships absent from or present in our windowless classrooms or the endlessly empty bubbles of standardized tests? How do the cascading losses deeply, indelibly mark us—knowingly or

not? What does it do to us to make casual—words on our tongues like [please speak aloud] *extermination, sacrifice-zone, blood-for-oil, ecocide, extinction*? How do I/we maintain the radical trust required as I leap across abysses of ruin and grief—as I provoke multiple personal and trans- or metapersonal transpositions—even by simply holding this stark question—*what does mean to educate in a time of mass extinction*? What does it sound like, the keening of one's own scholarship?

First Movement

Evoking Love and Lament:

A Brief Introduction to Our Enquiry, or Our Problem-as-Opportunity

> The elders are gone from the city gate; the young … have stopped their music.
> Joy is gone from our hearts; our dancing has turned to mourning. …
> Because of this our hearts are faint, because of these things our eyes grow dim.
> (Lamentations 5: 14-17 New International Version)
>
> Perhaps we, as a civilization and a species, are undergoing a rite of passage of the most epochal and profound kind, acted out on the stage of history with, as it were, the Cosmos itself as the tribal matrix of the initiatory drama. I believe that humankind has entered into the most critical stages of a death-rebirth mystery. (Tarnas, 2001, p. 19)

Referring to "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity," a November 1992 letter signed by 1,600 senior scientists from 71 countries, including over half of all living Nobel Prize winners, Marcus Peter Ford (2002) reminds us of "a truly remarkable fact: the best scientists of our age tell us that the world is on the verge of an ecological and social catastrophe that is virtually unimaginable in its scope and there is almost no response" (p. 2). Twenty-plus years later, humanity and the Earth have already approached or are rapidly approaching a number of critical tipping points. We are living in the midst of the sixth great extinction event on Planet Earth, the first to be caused by a sole species—the human—our own. (I should correct that and say *certain members of the human family*—ones who have

been living as if we are not a part of nature—who live with the illusion that we are somehow exempt and therefore superior—are causing this extinction event. Strictly speaking, we are also talking about that part of human culture as formed with/by industrial capitalism. See footnote on page 23.)

We face a multitude of intractable and interconnected problems—environmental, social, economic, and political—among them: climate disruption, peak oil, pollution, mass extinction, *perpetual* resources wars, and food-systems vulnerability; vast and increasing wealth disparities; erosion of democracy and an overtaking of the public sphere by private interests resulting in the gutting of public institutions; and corporate domination and control of governments, and the slow demise of nation-states. Many thinkers ultimately attribute these interfacing problems to an outmoded, modernist worldview, and epistemologies that accompany this worldview, spun into destructive ideologies that have produced a globally dominant economic system that undermines Life itself (e.g., Berry, 1988; Capra, 1982; Griffin, 1988; Klein, 2007, 2014; Macy, 1998; O'Sullivan, 1999).

Allied with this false belief in "humankind's emancipation from Nature" is, unsurprisingly, the belief that progressive technology is always good, and that humans can, through technological innovation, "fix" or transcend our many problems (e.g., Ausubel, Langford, & National Academy of Engineering, 1997; Kurzweil, 2005; Lynas, 2011; Simon, 1998). Robert Jensen (2013) calls this worldview "technological fundamentalism," which he describes as "a form of magical thinking that promises a way out of the problems that the extractive/industrial economy has created" (p. 46). Jensen and others agree, as I do, that our technological capabilities have outstripped our ability to ethically manage them, certainly as long as we are guided by the modern Western capitalist paradigm (e.g., Pirages & DeGeest,

2004; Wilson, 2002). As an overview of our modern technologies would suggest, neither are we able to anticipate their many unintended—sometimes-dire—consequences. As Einstein (1931) bluntly put it:

> [T]he hardly bought achievements of the machine age in the hands of our generation are as dangerous as a razor in the hands of a 3-year-old child. … Worst of all is the technical development which produces the means for the destruction of human life. (para. 1)

Technologies that emerge from a mechanistic understanding of the world and universe—that are conceived of as, or for, component fixes for large, complex systems—including the hubristic idea of geoengineering—ultimately cannot succeed at curing our many existential problems. Indeed they promise to create new ones (see, e.g., Hamilton, 2013, & Scientific American Editors, 2008). That is because these problems are rooted in distorted perceptions of ourselves (especially Westerners) in/and the universe—and many human systems that flow from these misperceptions, such as capitalism, militarism, and patriarchy. Turning again to Einstein, who famously (allegedly) said, "No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it. We must learn to see the world anew."[4]

By and large, Western educational institutions—principally molded by Enlightenment principles and the Newtonian/Cartesian scientific paradigm, in tandem with the political economy of the Industrial Growth Society—a designation attributed to Norwegian deep ecologist, Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng (Macy, in Chamberlin, 2009)—continue to reproduce a destructive worldview/cosmology, and are thus incapable of responding in any meaningful way to *World Scientists' Warning to Humanity*. The ideological forces that contribute to this

[4] There are many variations of this quotation popularly attributed to Einstein, but I have not been able to identify an original text/context.

modernist worldview—i.e., the privileging of rationalism, reductionism, temporality based on linear progression and time as commodity, positivism, materialism, individualism, and capitalist, laissez-faire economics—undergird all our dominant Western institutions, including especially education.

Broswimmer (2002) sees modern educational institutions as an integral component of the global "treadmill of production" (a term he attributes to Galbraith; but more correctly, Schnaiberg (1980); see also Gould, Pellow, & Schnaiberg (2008)). "The educational analogy to the global 'treadmill of production'," Broswimmer says, "is the 'degree mill' of ideological reproduction. Modern schooling has played an instrumental part of ideologically reproducing the progressively ecocidal global predicament" (p. 95). Broswimmer sees that our institutions—including schools—have failed to develop a serious educational response to the threat of life-systems collapse because they are too "deeply rooted in the political-economic structures" (p. 96) that rest on unlimited growth, production and consumption, and private interests over and above the public good. Even as I work to produce this scholarship, in an ironic twist to this thesis, the deleterious æffects of neoliberalism—which emerged from our educational institutions as the dominant ideology driving our global economic paradigm—are accelerating, including a systematic dismantling of public institutions—educational among them. This is happening in the context of—and is at the same time contributing to—what appears to be multiple slow-motion (yet accelerating) systemic collapses—ecological, economic, social and political. (As I write, I am aware that I, too, am participating in the "degree mill," and wonder to what ends all of these words will matter—dependent as they are here on fossil fuel-generated energy, removed Appalachian

mountaintops, dead trees, war- and rape-extracted Congolese coltan[5], and the exploitation of Chinese and other workers—all in a time of mass extinction.)

As one example of the largely missing educational response to our age of ecological catastrophe, I turn to my experience in the classroom as an instructor of social foundations of education, a two-credit hour requisite in a teacher preparation program in a regional university in the southeastern United States. This experience has led me to the unscientific conclusion that environmental concerns barely register for traditionally-aged undergraduate students, by way of public school curriculum and instruction—at least in North Carolina, where most of them were schooled and are preparing to teach. When recently introducing the concept of ecojustice to a class of 24 such students, I took an informal survey to determine whether they had been exposed in their prior schooling to environmental concerns, in classes other than biology. I also asked if these issues were coming up in any of their methods classes in their current teacher preparation program. Almost all of them said they had not and were not. I will say, however, that while these students generally had received an education that ill-prepared them to think about serious environmental concerns, I sensed that many of them knew on some level that the planet is in trouble.

In a thought experiment in which I asked them to imagine the world of their descendants in a hundred years, two scenarios emerged: generally, either, 1) humans will live in Jetsonian technological bliss, whereby they can get breakfast with the push of a button, or be safely propelled by way of computerized car to a city miles away without having to get

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[5] *Coltan*, or *columbite-tantalite*, is a rare Earth mineral used in consumer electronics products (computers, cell phones, etc.)—80% of which comes from war-ravaged Democratic Republic of the Congo (Tac Presse & Forestier, 2007).

behind the wheel; or, 2) the world will lie in waste and destruction (several students attributing this to the Second Coming of Christ).

My experience in this instance, among others, leads me to believe—make that, *know in my bones*—that we need to fundamentally reimagine and rethink our whole educational system, starting with the paradigmatic foundations on which it rests. This re-visioning of education must move way beyond current rhetorical and politicized reforms that are dangerously fixated on standardization[6], assessment, "vocationalization" (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013), and the oft touted "21st century skills"—which confine education to reproductive instrumentalism; dilute diversity of human thought, imagination, language and culture; and condition students for a global win-lose competition for limited jobs in capitalist markets, as well as increasingly authoritarian governance.[7]

Environmental Education

While my experience, including as pupil and parent, leads me to believe that students generally come away from their education having little exposure to environmental education or encouragement to think of themselves in an ecological context, some of the literature indicates that "environmental education" itself fails to adequately address our multiple

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[6] *standard* ~ mid-12c., "'flag or other conspicuous object to serve as **a rallying point for a military force**', from shortened form of Old French *estandart* 'military standard, banner'. According to Barnhart and others, this is probably from Frankish ****standhard***, literally 'stand fast or firm', a compound of unrecorded Frankish words cognate stand (v.) and hard. So called because the flag was fixed to a pole or spear and stuck in the ground to stand upright. The more common theory [OED, etc.] calls this folk-etymology and connects the Old French word to ***estendre* 'to stretch out', from Latin *extendere* (see extend)**…."

[7] I am encouraged that a critique of the eco-cultural foundations as integral to social foundations of education is beginning to get some traction in the teacher education field, as evidenced by the publication of *EcoJustice Education: Toward Diverse, Democratic, and Sustainable Communities* (Martusewicz, Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2011). Emerging largely from the theoretical work of C. A. Bowers (e.g., 2001, 2012), *EcoJustice Education* received the Critics Choice Book Award of the American Educational Studies Association in 2011.

environmental crises in any significantly transformative way. Wikipedia and other popular websites define environmental education, by way of the Tbilisi Declaration (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1977), as "organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and, particularly, *how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems in order to live sustainably*" [italics added]. Martusewicz, Edmundson, and Lupinacci (2011) concur that one of the problems with environmental education is the way that ecology is defined as "the scientific study and management of natural systems assumed to be outside of human communities…as topics to be added to the general curriculum rather than altering it" (p. 10).

And, although following the 35-year old recommendations of the much more complex and nuanced Tbilisi Declaration would surely advance the development of sustainable human behaviors in relationship to ecologies, Sterling and University of Bath (2003) argues that the notion of "environmental education" rests on a "materialist ontology, an instrumental and universalist view of education, and often [utilizes] an instructive, transmissive methodology" (p. 311). Environmental education, as such, does nothing to challenge cultural, philosophical, theological, and psychological systems that put the human over and above the rest of nature. Within this frame, our environmental problems are understood as merely behavioral rather than ontological or epistemological, while change is falsely understood as linear and rational (Sterling & U. B., 2003, p. 311)—as opposed to systemic, process-relational, and even chaotic. Following from this behavioral and managerial approach, we are taught *about* the environment, and *to do the right thing* (p. 311). Changing deeper issues of consciousness and interconnectedness are not addressed, as we conceive the problem to be one of control, communication (i.e., "getting the message

across"), and lobbying governments (p. 311). For example, students may be taught to *reduce, reuse and recycle*, to write letters to their representatives, and that development of the right technology will *someday in the future* save us from ourselves. (We certainly need "solutionary" (term adapted from Weil, 2011) technologies, but we cannot count on technology alone to achieve sustainability—and certainly not if we, especially in the United States, continue to direct so much intellectual and creative capital towards human surveillance and militarized technologies.) Allan Schnaiberg (in Broswimmer, 2002) supports this critique of environmental education when he says that it is "deeply flawed at every level of the education system. … I have repeatedly found … that students and even colleagues lack any really systemic perspectives on ecological systems, on social systems, and especially on the systemic relationship between the two" (p. 96). This analysis of environmental education, as such, could be extended to mainstream approaches to *sustainability*, a word that is used (and abused) to mean many different things, including within the context of education. Like environmental education, sustainability has not moved sufficiently beyond rhetoric to "an ethical principle, which restructures our relationship with the Earth and its creatures" (Kothari, 2010, p. 431).

Approaches to Sustainability

The idea of sustainable development grew out of increasing awareness of the links between environmental degradation, socioeconomic inequality and endemic poverty around the globe, and concern for humanity's future prospects. According to Hopwood, Mellor, and O'Brien (2005, p. 39), the term surfaced as a way to join environmental and socioeconomic issues most prominently in the World Conservation Strategy. In World Conservation Strategy (International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations Environment

Programme (UNEP), & World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), 1980), while a pivotal and important document, we find terms such as *sustainable utilization*—for instance, of species and ecosystems (p. 26 and 32), *environmental planning*, *rational use allocation* (p. 40-41), and *capacity to manage* ecosystems (p. 42)—all which inherently reveal the illusory human impulse for detached control and utility of nature. In 1987, *Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development* (WCED)—also known as the Brundtland Report—notably defined sustainable development (Braidotti, 2006, p. 206; Hopwood et al., 2005, p. 39). In this United Nations report, sustainable development is designated as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, Chapter 2, para. 1). Thus, it "defines needs from a human standpoint; as Lee (2000, p. 32) has argued, 'sustainable development is an unashamedly anthropocentric concept'" (Hopwood et al., 2005, p. 39).

The idea of sustainable development, as such, is a concept that is widely evoked today, and tends toward instrumentalist reforms; some see it as "a smokescreen for corporate interests to continue with business as usual" (Lamberton, 2005, p. 54). The ambiguity of the term "sustainable development" as defined by the Brundtland Report, according to Hopwood et al., 2005) "allows business and governments to be in favour of sustainability without any fundamental challenge to their present course"; this includes the oxymoronic idea of "sustainable growth" (p. 40). Reflecting on the Brundtland Report in 1989, Ivan Illich (2009) reflected on how "the underlying critique of the concept of development still remains outside their thinking. The outer forms are crumbling," he said, "but the conceptual underpinnings of 'development' remain vigorous" (p. 82).

Martusewitz et al. (2011, p. 13) discuss "education for sustainable development" as a model which is often accommodated and marginalized by mainstream forces, such as universities, arguing with Sterling (2001) that it largely fails to change the overall educational paradigm, and therefore, in my reading, perpetuates perceptions of the human as external to nature. Sterling (2001) takes the word *sustainable* and draws out its positive and transformative connotations, advocating *sustainable education* instead of education for sustainability, or for sustainable development:

> Sustainable education is a change of educational culture, one which develops and embodies the theory and practice of sustainability in a way which is critically aware. It is therefore a transformative paradigm which values, sustains and realises human potential in relation to the need to attain and sustain social, economic and ecological well being, recognising that they must be part of the same dynamic. (p. 22)

Braidotti (2006) develops an "ethics of sustainability," also positively drawing from the term, as used in the social sciences, social theory and philosophy, as "a bridge-builder which draws together areas of study that are not often connected," and which "raises issues of ethical and political concern and value" (p. 206-207). Her ethics of sustainability is based on the interconnections of forces that "link us to our social and organic environment" and lead to a "qualitative or creative leap that form a change of culture"; she conceives these leaps as the creative force of transpositions[8]—and an "eco-philosophy of belonging and of transformations" (p. 8).

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[8] To be elaborated upon in the dissertation is Braidotti's (2006) concept of *transposition*, which metaphorically draws its meaning from musical transposition and biological evolution via Barbara McClintock. "Transposable moves appear to proceed by leaps and bounds, but are not deprived of their logic, or coherence" (p. 5).

Denial and the Work of Despair and Grief, Love and Be/longing

> How those fires burned that are no longer, how the weather worsened, how the shadow of the seagull vanished without a trace. Was it the end of a season, the end of a life? (Strand, 2012, p. 37)

Arising from and with a critique of the prevailing modernist worldview, its attendant broken mechanistic cosmology, and its institutional offspring—along with a stark assessment of our ecological condition—Edmund O'Sullivan (1999) quotes Indian scholar, author and activist, Rajni Kothari[9] who, in 1988, bluntly proposed a *problématique*[10] for our times: survival of the human species and of civilization. "The *problématique*," said Kothari, is affecting institutional structures, the behaviour of people, their psychic responses" (p. 32). O'Sullivan takes this *problématique* of human survival and applies it to education:

> The crucial task of the educator will be to develop an awareness that sees through the logic of destructive globalization and to combine this with critical skills to resist…. Three major tasks confront the educator in the survival mode. The first is coming out of denial, the second is dealing with despair, and the third is dealing with loss and grief. (O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 33)

O'Sullivan joins a chorus of other voices (e.g., Berry, 1999; Braidotti, 2006; Butler, 2004; Hanh, 2010; Hamilton, 2010; Hillman, 1981; Macy, 1998) who call for recognizing our individual and collective denial and feelings of despair that springs from our human disconnection and the ecological devastation that surrounds and inhabits us—including acknowledging our complicity in that devastation. This includes emotionally, ethically and

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[9] Founder in 1963 of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies.

[10] *Problematique* refers to critical problems facing humankind—problems that do not exist in isolation, or are not capable of being solved in their own terms. *Problematique* refers to a generalized meta-system of these problems.

practically confronting, for instance, climate disruption and loss of life forms on a massive scale. It involves experiencing and expressing our conscious and sub- or unconscious grief and despair—which are intimately and affirmatively inseparable from values of love and gratitude (Macy, 1998). And, it engages the subjective "ability to affect and be affected" positively, which Braidotti (2006, p. 148) maintains is vital to an ethics of sustainability, and linked to desire and our "ability to endure in the sense both of lasting and suffering" (p. 259). Endurance, as I understand it here, in turn requires love, and "Love begins as allurement" (Swimme, 1984, p. 43). May my own love and grief be present throughout this work—allured as I am—as I endure….

My experience leads me to believe that at the very heart of our educational institutions are existential disconnection and denial: disconnection from the cosmological and ecological systems of which we are a part (including from each Other—the human and more-than-human); disconnection from our desires or allurement beyond shiny consumable things that falsely promise happiness and fulfillment; and denial that these disconnections have grave consequences—from the personal to the planetary.

The chances are slim indeed for a future that is not bleak (if non-existent) for our human and more-than-human descendants if we don't move from disconnection and through denial—and emerge from our "autism," as Thomas Berry (1988) deemed our pathological collective condition, "manifest in the arrogance with which we reject our role as an integral member of the Earth community in favor of a radical anthropocentric life attitude" (p. 208).

> We are talking only to ourselves. We are not talking to the rivers, we are not listening to the wind and stars. We have broken the great conversation. By breaking that

> conversation we have shattered the universe. All the disasters that are happening now are a consequence of that spiritual "autism." (Berry, T., in Heffern, 2001, para. 12)

Braidotti (2006) warns: "What is at stake is the very possibility of the future, of duration or continuity" (p. 137). Clearly, our educational culture has created/is creating this highly conditional future. Feeble attempts at reform for more than 30 years—especially as have been highjacked by dangerous ideological forces—have been and are more than inadequate—they are destructive. It's time for the in/appropriate (a central theme arising from and with our quest/ion/ing, with which we will later improvise—jazz-like—and develop towards findings). Can education—radically re-visioned and performed with love and compassion—serve the processes of "coming back to life," of "reconnecting our lives and our world," as Macy[11] (1998) suggests is needed? These are just some of the many questions and concerns that motivate this work. While we have mountains to move, it helps to have faith in quantum leaps.

Retrospect: Love and Grief in a Time of Climate Change & Changing Climates of Time

> What is happening in our times is not just another historical transition or simply another cultural change. The devastation of the planet that we are bringing about is negating some hundreds of millions, even billions, of years of past development on the earth. This is a most momentous period of change, a change unparalleled in the four and a half billion years of earth history. (Berry, in Berry, Clarke, & Dunn, 1991, p. 4)

Many moons have passed since writing for my proposal the preceding brief introduction to our problem/opportunity of study. Returning to it now, as I edit and adjust for

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[11] We will return to Macy and the "Work that Reconnects" in our Fourth Movement.

my final paper, I am dissatisfied with its insufficiency. Questions keep proliferating as my perspective widens, and comprehension and concern deepen. The truth is, that from day-to-day and week-to-week, we can easily glean from and cite articles, essays, studies, educated opinion and tragic narratives that entail descriptions and analysis of often catastrophic events, significant scientific research and predictions based on research—alongside often infuriating stories of political obstacles to solutionary[12] change (imposed and enforced mainly by powerful economic interests)—that bolster arguments for this enquiry's justification. I reference a thin cross-section of these from a period of just a few recent days in following text. Considering the scope and unfathomable implications of our existential problem, I have no doubt that anything I say by way of introduction necessarily will fall short of the significance I wish to convey. To a degree, I have to trust that this relative and necessary brevity will suffice—a trust sustained by a hunch that you probably already know our problem somewhere deep in your cosmically-forged bones, as I know I do. (And, yes, I do know this language—*hunch, cosmically-forged*, and *a knowing deep in your bones*—raises all kinds of reliably red flags—or red reliability flags—on the academic circuit. So you may consider them, if you wish, alongside citations for empirical research, metaphoric truths.)

This inadequacy I feel as I return to our introduction as it was first proposed is as much a function of my own heightened/matured awareness and the relative *speed* with which our circumstances[13] have changed and are changing—as it is the nature and scope of the problem/opportunity itself. And so, while thinking of *speed* as a significant though perhaps not obvious aspect to our problem/opportunity, I am prompted to acknowledge the important

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12 *Solutionary* borrowed from Zoe Weil (Institute for Humane Education).

13 These circumstantial changes include geophysical/chemical, biological and socio-political concerns.

subject of *time* itself—both as an integral aspect of our problem/opportunity of enquiry, and of the enquiry process itself.

S*peed* of course is variable and its æffects relative. I have come to think of its function in a time of mass extinction—as applied to human behaviors within ecological systems—in terms of the *hurry-up-and-slow-down paradox.* And though we will wait to consider this in more detail, the inclusion of *time and temporality* as part of an introduction to our problem/opportunity seems important—as it is/has been both conceptually and personally significant to my research process. So, while I surface the subject of time at this juncture, we'll not dwell on it now. Our Eighth Movement will become a brief meditation on time's bearing on our topic and research process.

I am also aware that we have not, as yet, considered much in the way of particular ecological problems themselves. And so, in addition to *time,* I also want to amend our introduction to include, in particular, a more-than-cursory consideration of climate disruption. As climate change is inextricably linked to accelerating extinctions, it is necessary to consider these issues together. As Thomas et al. (2004) make clear with their study of extinction risk from climate change, "…the consistent overall conclusions across analyses establish that anthropogenic[14] [*homofractugenic*] climate warming at least ranks along other

[14] From here, unless it is used in a quotation, I will replace the oft-used term *anthropogenic* with an alternative, *homofractugenic* (at first came *anthropo/capitalgenic*...but this seems just too awkward on the tongue). In doing so, I am responding to a moment of critical insight imparted to me by Dinesh Paudel (January 28, 2015, personal communication), who, as a Nepalese scholar—and through the lens of post-colonial theory—troubles the word *anthropogenic* by insisting our ecological challenges, such as climate disruption, do not simply originate with *The Human—Anthropos*, but in one particular human system—that of capitalism—and more so, advanced global capitalism. *Homofractugenic* implies that the causes of our fraught condition are consequential of those humans having created and adopted a capitalist, extractivist/exploitative economic model—which both

recognized threats to global biodiversity…[and]…is likely to be the greatest threat in many if not most regions" [of the world] (p. 147).

Now let's consider that both the indicators of climate disruption and extinction rates are quickly becoming more glaring and, indeed, frightening, while determined strategies and policies for addressing these issues are slow to ignite either public imagination, or the will of enough policy makers and other "leaders"—who may well, in fact, be leading us over the proverbial climate cliff and into the extinction abyss. Though the reasons are, of course, complex, I wonder if this is first an educational problem—but, more likely, we are dealing with a chicken-and-egg paradox.

Unbelievably, climate *denial*—often fueled by those with ties to petroleum interests—continues to be a serious issue, and there is just way too much fiddling going on (puns intended). For example, while 2014 was the warmest year to date based on records going back to 1880 (Kahn & Climate Central, 2015), Oklahoma Senator James Inhofe—simultaneously *chairing* the Environment and Public Works Committee, while known as the staunchest climate change denier in Congress—took to the Senate floor (26 February 2015) and tossed a snowball to the Senate president to prove once and for all that climate change is a hoax (Washington Post Editorial Board, 2015)! According to a study by CAP Action, as

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reflects and perpetuates a shattered cosmology, a mere existence broken away from the pattern that connects, and, if you will, self-exile from the garden. See: *Latin, Fractus: Perfect passive participle of frangō ("break, fragment") Participle frāctus m (feminine frācta, neuter frāctum); first/second declension 1) broken, shattered, having been broken. 2) vanquished, defeated, having been defeated.* I also have in mind here Thomas Berry's (1999) charge to "reinvent the human at the species level," considered in later text. We will later consider a potential name for a new type of human towards which we might aspire: perhaps *homo integrans*—a suggested designation for the human perpetually in the process of integration into an ever-shifting pattern that connects—or *homo complexus affectus—the enfolded or embraced human, embodied feeling and desiring….*

reported by Germain (2015), "Over 56 percent of [the majority party in the current] 114th Congress deny or question the science behind human-caused climate change" (para. 1). This denial spills (or is poured) into education (and other) policy, where an active campaign is underway to suppress the climate conversation in public schools. In several State houses, bills have been adopted or are being considered (some with ties to the American Legislative Exchange Council, or ALEC[15]), which require climate change skepticism or denial be taught in schools as a legitimate alternative to human-caused climate change. Consider, as reported by Banerjee (2012):

> Texas and Louisiana have introduced education standards that require educators to teach climate change denial as a valid scientific position. South Dakota and Utah passed resolutions denying climate change. Tennessee and Oklahoma also have introduced legislation to give climate change skeptics a place in the classroom. (para. 3)

More recently, Quinn (2014) reports that West Virginia altered new state science standards before the state school board adopted them in December 2014 to "encourage more student debate on the idea that humans' greenhouse gas emissions are causing a global rise in temperatures" (para. 2). This, as if, there is a genuine debate to be had.

This news sidles up next to recent (and recurring) headlines that point to large and dangerous amounts of methane emissions from melting permafrost in Artic regions (anticipated to sharply accelerate global warming) (McCoy, 2015); severe drought brought on by climate change fueling war in Syria (Westcott, 2015); "California's epic drought …

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[15] See American Legislative Exchange Ccouncil's (2013) "Environmental Literacy Improvement Act," which among other things, mandates curriculum must "not be designed to change student behavior, attitudes or values" (Section 2.I).

about to set another seemingly unbreakable record" (Holthaus, 2015). Indeed, Jay Famiglietti (2015), senior water scientist at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory/Caltech and a professor of Earth system science at UC Irvine, reports that January was the driest there since record-keeping began in 1895; he also informs us that the state has only about one year of water supply left in its reservoirs, while the groundwater, their strategic backup supply, is rapidly vanishing (para. 5). Meanwhile, predictions by Lester Brown (Worldwatch Institute and Earth Policy Institute) are for "Vast dust bowls threaten[ing] tens of millions with hunger" in China and Africa (Goldenberg, 2015).

Unsurprisingly—even as too many are still swayed by climate denialism[16]—evidence suggests (Vaidyanathan & Climate Wire, 2015) that U. S. public opinion concerning whether certain human behaviors are driving planetary warming is "based on political orientation and ideology," which in turn "are reflected in their level of education" (para. 2). A poll released January 29, 2015 by Pew Research Center and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), as reported by Vaidyanathan and ClimateWire (2015, January 30), "captured a significant split between what scientists and the general public believe on climate change" (para. 3). In 2014, 87% of U.S. scientists said that human activity is driving global warming, while only half the American public believed the same. In a 2013 poll, 77% of U.S. scientists said climate change is a very serious problem, while only 33% of the U.S. public agreed (para. 4).

But despite public opinion in the U.S. regarding its causes or consequences, climate disruption is evident across the globe. Sometimes it is only a matter of stepping outside to find confirmation, while an Internet search with keywords "Extreme Weather Events" by

[16] I could simply say "climate denial" here. "Climate denialism" indicates the term's proper ideological underpinning.

year produces long lists of historic measures. Even as I write, from day to day, I cannot keep up with historic records routinely broken around the world—record precipitation and lack of precipitation, temperature (heat and cold) extremes, wind speeds, barometric pressure, etc. Just since I began writing the first part of our introduction, the world has seen numerous deadly storms, many *historic*[17]—"super" typhoons and hurricanes, tornados and floods, mudslides and avalanches, and snow, wind and firestorms. In 2013, while fires raged across parts of Australia, the Bureau of Meteorology there had to add a new color—deep purple—to their weather maps to designate exceeding all-time heat records. "Previously the Bureau's heat index was capped at 48°C (118.4°F), but now recorded temperatures of over 50°C (122°F) have pushed the limit of the scale to an unheard of 54°C, which is equivalent to 129°F," reported Queally (2013, para. 2). Climate refugees—whose numbers are set to dramatically increasingly—are on the move, such as 110,000 Kiribati, who the IPCC projects "the Pacific ocean will swallow … by the end of this century. Life in Kiribati is *life against the clock*" (Godfery, 2014, para. 2, italics mine).

At least two other related phenomenal disasters-in-progress issue from climate disruption—both associated with oceans—in the forms of acidification and sea-level rise. Especially the first—acidification—has significant bearing on extinctions—and has been dubbed by Jane Lubchenco, head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as "climate change's equally evil twin" (in Heilprin, 2009, para. 18). "This 'double trouble'

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[17] As I write, the latest storm occurred just two days ago 13 March 2015): "Pam is the second most intense storm of the South Pacific Ocean according to pressure, after Zoe of 2002; Pam is also the third most intense storm in the Southern Hemisphere by the same metric, only after Zoe of 2002 and Gafilo in 2004. In addition, Pam had the highest 10-minute sustained wind speed of any South Pacific tropical cyclone; it is tied with Cyclone Orson [1989] and Cyclone Monica [2006] for having the strongest winds of any cyclone in the Southern Hemisphere." (Cyclone Pam, n.d.)

of climate change and ocean acidification is arguably the most critical environmental issue that humans will have to face in the immediate future. The impacts of ocean acidification will be global," warn Makarow, Ceulemans, and Horn (2009, p. 9-10). If the oceans continue to acidify at the current rate, says Riebesell (2013), "scientists predict with reasonable confidence that significant changes in marine ecosystems and biodiversity will occur within our lifetimes" (para. 7). The rate of acidification, according to a *Nature Geoscience* study (by Ridgwell & Schmidt, as reported by Zimmer, 2010), is "ten times faster today than 55 million years ago" when the last mass extinction of marine species occurred (para. 6). We risk a biological meltdown of marine life by century's end, corroborates a 2010 *Geological Society* study, as reported by Romm (2010).

In parallel to the twinned catastrophes of climate mayhem and the dying of oceans, extinction rates overall continue to climb, and also feature in recent news. Although exact rate of species loss is impossible to determine (indeed, the total number of species is unknown), it is abundantly clear that we are in the throes of a mass extinction event. I look back over the course of my research and wonder how many species have passed into oblivion in the time it has taken me to enquire into and think through what might be said about education in such a time, as futile an exercise as that has often seemed. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (2005), by way of estimates by scientists as reported in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, as many as 150-200 species of plant, insect, bird and mammal become extinct every twenty-four hours (Vidal, 2010). Although extinction is a natural phenomenon, it occurs at natural or background rate of about one to five species per year. Scientists estimate we're now losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the background rate, with literally dozens going extinct every day—greater than anything the

world has experienced since the dinosaurs vanished nearly 65 million years ago. Using this figure in my formula, I calculate the number of species that may have become extinct since my proposal passed in March 2012 (about three years ago) at a stunning 164,250-219,000. If I take a comparatively very conservation number—say ten per day go extinct—that is still 10, 950! According to the Center for Biological Diversity (n.d.) as many as 30 to 50% of all species are possibly headed toward extinction by mid-century.

As if we needed any further confirmation of dire conditions, as I attempt to draw this section of our introduction to a close, research just published by the journal *Science* includes two reports; a third study is to be published tomorrow in *Anthropocene Review* (19 January 2015). The first report (McCauley et al., 2015) further and more loudly sounds the alarm concerning the extinction of marine species due to rapidly deteriorating (acidifying and warming) oceans (Zimmer, 2015). The second (Steffen et al., 2015) attempts to gauge the breaking points in the natural world, with four of nine planetary boundaries already having been crossed as a result of human activity; unsurprisingly, the report concludes that in the coming decades, the Earth could cease to be a "safe operating space" for human beings (Achenbach, 2015). The third, in a prepublication report summary in *ScienceDaily* (International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, 2015), assesses the speed and influence that various factors have had in degrading planetary systems, and underlines how the trajectories of Earth and human development are tightly intertwined. "It is difficult to overestimate the scale and speed of change," says lead author Professor Will Steffen (para. 3).

And so we come around full circle to the *scale and speed of change* that keeps asserting itself in language and in fact in addressing issues of climate disruption and extinction. As we pause to let some of this reality soak in, I invite you to listen attentively—

to develop an ear and a feeling for this theme of time and temporality—not as something well-defined and understood—yet sustained like a musical drone—a haunting low note—a steady hum—continuously resonating through most or all of our piece—to extend through Movement Eight—and beyond. We will return to the theme of time and temporality. But for now, let's consider further aspects of the significance and purpose of this research, including a few core questions that have emerged.

Figure 1: CO2 and Global Temperature Over the 20th Century ~ CO2 green line derived from ice cores obtained at Law Dome, East Antarctica (Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center); CO2 blue line measured at Mauna Loa (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration); global temperature anomaly (NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index). (Cook, 2009)

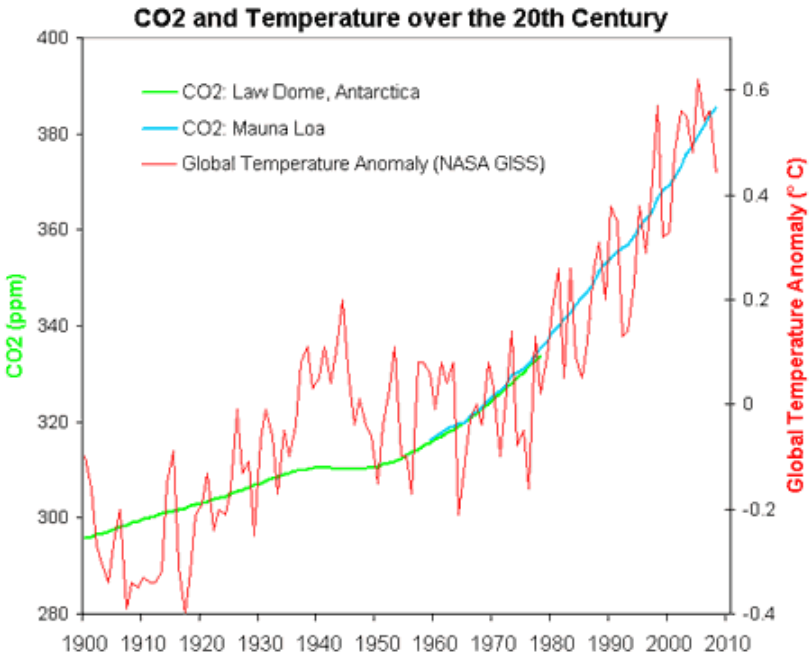

Figure 2: Recent monthly average Mauna Loa CO_2
February 2015: 400.26 ppm
February 2014: 397.91 ppm
(National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2015, March 5)

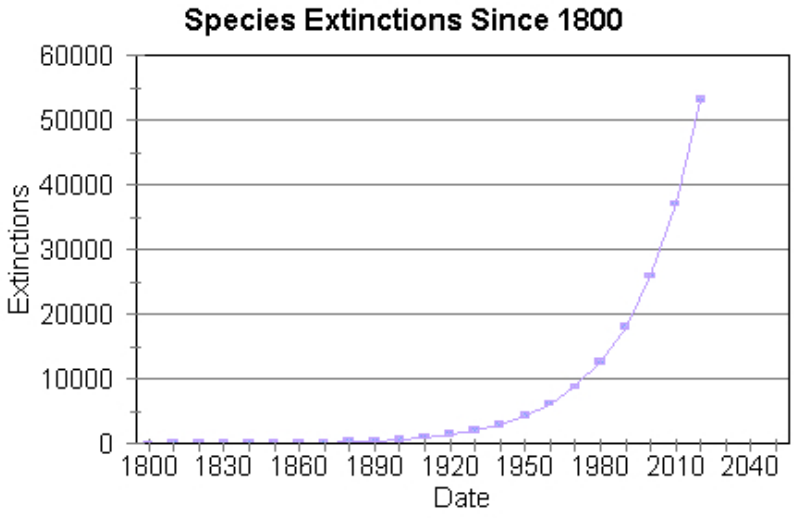

Figure 3: Species extinctions since 1800 ~ This graph is based on a mathematical model "linking species to habitat loss developed by Edward O. Wilson and others" (Whole Systems Foundation, 2010). "Wilson warns that the biodiversity crisis is 'immense and hidden', and has been pushed from center stage by the climate change debate" (**Randerson,** 2009). But of course, as we have seen, these issues are linked.

The Slopes of Statistics Lie Before Us…

The rising hills, the slopes,
of statistics
lie before us.
The steep climb
of everything, going up,
up, as we all
go down.

~ From *For the Children* (Gary Snyder, 1974, p. 86).

I was born in 1958, just as the slopes of extinctions and CO_2 emissions took radical, trajectories upwards, as indicated in figures (1 and 3) on the previous page. This period since I was born represents "a pivotal point of change in the relationship between humans and their life support systems … one in which human activities rapidly changed from merely *influencing* the global environment in *some* ways to *dominating* it in *many* ways" (Crutzen & Steffen, in Hamilton, 2012, p. 2). Significantly, from the beginning of same period, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) was published before I turned four-years old; and "The Land Ethic" by Aldo Leopold was posthumously published in 1949—both literary watersheds for ecological consciousness. Perhaps these trajectories—their radical significance as they impinge on our conscience—play into my sense of personal loss, grief and obligation, as my birth and life and Life's decline so closely correlate. And so, as I've indicated, I think of this research as a kind of quest—an extension of my own personal trajectory of love and grief that I imagine mirroring the trend lines of extinctions—as well as a part of a cultural trajectory—a *rite of passage*, with others of my species, into/through *the most critical stages of a death-rebirth mystery* (Tarnas, 2001, p.19). This is enquiry as vocation—my/our purpose and significance for these times.

The thinking, compassion, Art, and action of many human teachers have inspired and guided me in this quest (which I will consider in more depth in Movement Four). Among them, for example, is the late Thomas Berry, who taught, "the universe is a communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects" (with many variations, i.e., 1999, p. 16). Berry (1999) called humanity to what he named the *Great Work* of our time: ushering in the *Ecozoic* era, which he envisioned as a time when "humans will be present to the Earth in a mutually enhancing manner" (p. 55). In order for this creative new era to emerge—to prevail over what he termed the *Technozoic era* (Swimme & Berry, 1992)—humans must realize that there exists just one, singular Earth community. Berry (1997) says:

> There is no such thing as a human community in any manner separate from the Earth community. The human community and the natural world will go into the future as a single integral community, or we will both experience disaster on the way. However differentiated in its modes of expression, there is only one Earth community—one economic order, one health system, one moral order, one world of the sacred. (p. 199)

After decades of deep scholarly and monastic reflection as a cultural and intellectual historian, philosopher and "geologian"—Berry understood and warned that humans had terminated the *Cenozoic* era of Earth's geologic timescale, which characterized the past 60-65 million years of evolution of life forms on our planet. He referred to this waning era as Earth's "lyrical period," which brought forth songbirds, flowers, trees, marine life and tropical forests (Berry, 2009, p. 89). Sometimes referred to as the Age of Mammals, the Cenozoic era included the appearance of humans. Like Berry,

the late Val Plumwood (2007) also beckoned a new mode of humanity, submitting, if our species does not survive the ecological crises we have precipitated, it will probably be

> due to our failure to imagine and work out new ways to live with the Earth… The time of *Homo reflectus*, the self-critical and self-revising one, has surely come. *Homo faber,* the thoughtless tinkerer, is clearly not going to make it. We will go onwards in a different mode of humanity, or not at all. (Plumwood, 2007, para. 1)

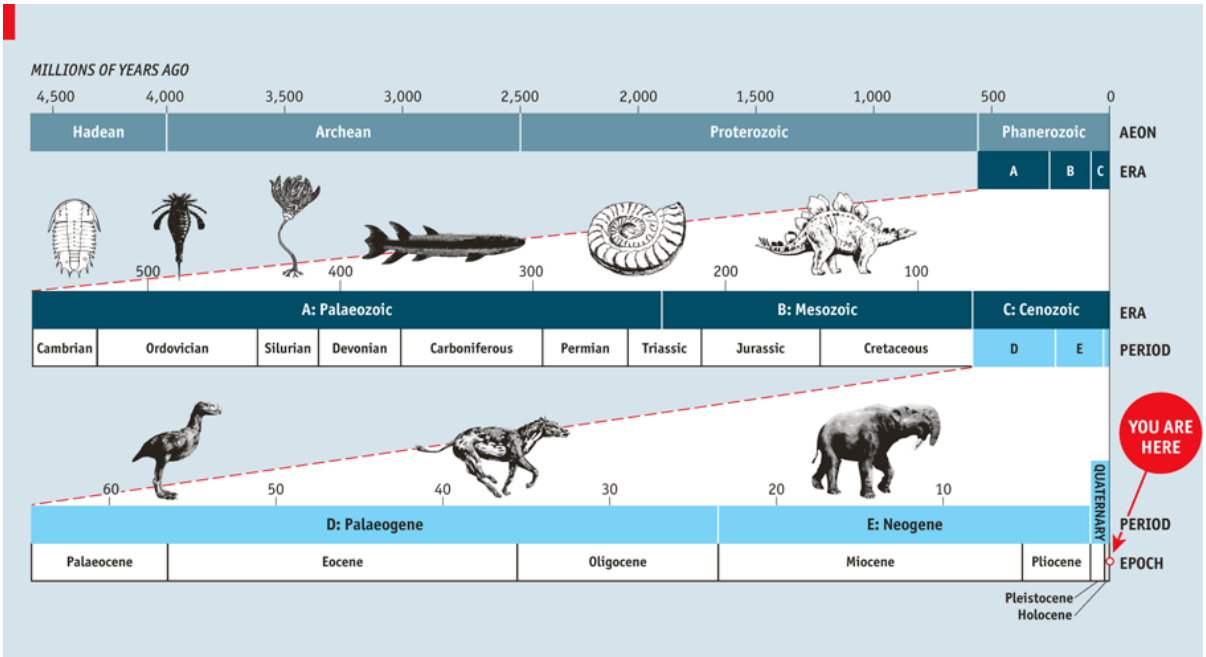

Figure 4: The procession of geological periods, epochs, and eras ~ This graph (Economist, 2011) illustrates the procession of geological periods, epochs, and eras over a period of about 4.5 billion years, and the relativity of human presence on earth. The Anthropocene designation, for which there is no place on the graph, would be placed, depending on contesting perspectives, from around either c. 10,000 years ago with the advent of agriculture; c. 200 years ago with the onset of the industrial revolution; or around 1945 with atomic fallout (see footnote 19 on page 39-40) I would place the Ecozoic era as emergent from the early 20th century, when the Western scientific paradigm began to radically shift with discovery by Einstein, Hubble, Bohr and others of both quantum theory, and expansion of the universe, when we began to better understand our place in the cosmos.

To illustrate the human in temporal context, Figure 4 above gives a simple visual perspective of human presence on the planet relative to the Age of Mammals or Cenozoic era of the past 60-65 million years, and the short Holocene epoch of the past twelve thousand years. It is awesome to consider in the context of thirteen and a half billion years of the universe story and about four and a half billion years of earth story, that it was only 2.6 million years ago that we see one of the earliest expressions of the human species: *homo habilis.* The bipedal *Homo erectus* emerged about one and a half million years ago, and *Homo sapiens,* from which contemporary humans descend, appear about two hundred thousand years ago. Modern humans are about forty-fifty thousand years young; and our earliest small settlements date from around 8,000 B.C.E. (Swimme & Berry, 1992, p. 145-163).

In 2015 we find ourselves in the "thinnest of places"—with so much hanging in the liminal balance—at the threshold of a new era, and even, necessarily, a new human (it might be said, if there is to be a human at all). With this in mind, Berry (1999) calls for reinventing the human at the species level—"with critical reflection, within the community of life-systems, in a time-developmental context, by means of story and shared dream experience" (p. 159)—and he emphasizes that this reinvention process is a sacred, meaningful and celebratory act (Grim, n.d., para. 18, 40). And, so we are also called to imagine and conjure a new era that will dependently co-arise—providing and reinforcing the conditions necessary for our conscious transposition and reinvention. Simultaneously imagining, "birthing" and "being born into" a new era entails recovering "our unique relation to the larger story of who we are" and "reaching into our genetic relatedness to the earth" (Grim, n.d., para. 18).

Into What New Era Shall We Move?

The whole Earth community is processing into a whole new planetary era—although it is yet to be determined just what that era will be like—or even whether or not it will consist of conditions conducive to the sustenance and/or flourishing of Life—perhaps especially for human life. Thinkers and dreamers from across a spectrum of disciplines have given and are giving thought to—trying to imagine and articulate—what this new era might look and feel like—and how we might arrive there together, if at all. So much depends on decisions by and actions of the human community—as well as timing of these decisions and actions. Consequentially, perhaps most important are the consciousness and affections out of which these decisions and actions arise. Many believe we are already too late—that too many tipping points have tipped—and that our failure to decide and act decisively and in solidarity is a consequence of our having largely failed, as Einstein would say, "to see the world anew."

Let's consider a couple of contrasting possible eras or epochs that, to date, have been proposed. Of these two, one has gotten much more press, so to speak (well, actually, literally): the Anthropocene. Less well known is the propositional Ecozoic Era, which is a comprehensively and philosophically considered vision of our present-future that calls us most deeply to transpositional possibilities. The Anthropocene does little to challenge or change our consciousness in any significant way; the Ecozoic demands that we see—and act in—the world anew.

Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme offer an unambiguous account of the termination of the "lyric" Cenozoic era (sampled above), while also offering a term and conceptual human presence for an emerging era—the *Ecozoic*—realistically situating the

dependently co-arising human within the context of planetary and cosmological systems. Berry—in conversation/collaboration with Swimme for *The Universe Story* (1992)—first imagined and coined the term "Ecozoic" era—which describes a geologic era wherein humans live in a mutually enhancing relationship with Earth and the Earth community. Berry (1997) enumerates five conditions for the integral emergence of the Ecozoic Era. Encapsulated, those conditions include an understanding/realization that:

1) the universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects; each component of the Earth is integral with every other component; we must develop the capacity for intimate rapport (p. 196);
2) the Earth exists, and can survive, only in its integral functioning. It cannot survive in fragments any more than any organism can survive in fragments. Yet the earth is not a global sameness. It is a differentiated unity and must be sustained in the integrity and interrelations of its many bioregional contexts (p. 197);
3) the Earth is a one-time endowment. … We must reasonably suppose that the Earth is subject to irreversible damage (p. 198);
4) the Earth is primary and humans are derivative. The present distorted view is that humans are primary and the Earth and its integral functioning only a secondary consideration—thus the pathology manifest in our various human institutions (p. 198);
5) there is a single Earth community. There is no such thing as a human community in any manner separate from the Earth community (p. 199).

Additionally, Berry and Swimme (1992) reject as leading to an ontological dead-end the continuation of the *Technozoic era*, of which they say:

> A newly developed mystique of our plundering industrial society is committed to moving out of the Cenozoic, not by entry into the Ecozoic, but by shaping an even more controlled order of things that might be designated as the *Technozoic era*. … Only a comprehensive commitment to the Ecozoic can counter the mystical commitment to our present commercial-industrial establishments to the Technozoic. There is a special need in this transition out of the Cenozoic to awaken a consciousness of the sacred dimension of the Earth. For what is at stake is not simply an economic resource, it is the meaning of existence itself. (p. 249-250)

The *Technozoic era* sounds an awful lot like the designation for a new geological epoch for the lithosphere—*the Anthropocene*—popularized by atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen and American biologist Eugene Stoermer (2000)—a decade after Swimme and Berry were writing.[15] Like the Technozoic, I find there to be a certain dismal resignation in this particular term, which centers the human—a particular cultural breed of human and their technological extensions—so completely: the reflection of a desolating and mistaken notion of *dominion*. I find the interpretation of this term by Kieran Suckling[16] (2011) instructive along these lines, as he contests the term, with others, based on

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[15] *Anthropocene* (Anthropocene, n.d.) "appears to have been used by Russian scientists at least as early as the 1960s to refer to the Quaternary, the most recent geological Period…[and]…was coined with a different sense in the 1980s by ecologist Eugene F. Stoermer" (para. 1). Other names, enumerated by Elizabeth Kolbert (2013), proposed for the new age that (some) humans have ushered in, include: *Catastrophozoic* instead of *Cenozoic* era (conservation biologist, Michael Soulé); *Homogenocene* (South African entomologist, Michael Samways); *Myxocene* (Daniel Pauly, Canadian marine biologist, borrowing from the Greek word for "slime"); and *Anthrocene* (Andrew Revkin, American journalist) (Note Kolbert misses the *Ecozoic*—perhaps an indication that scientists and philosopher/theologians are not adequately reaching each other?)

[16] Kieran Suckling is Executive Director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

"suspicions about the reinscription of anthropocentrism" (para. 10). "The Anthropocene," says Suckling:

> …does not signal a unity of humans and nature or a breaking down of conceptual barriers. It is the proclamation of dominance" (para. 13). … 'Anthropocene' is more fundamentally the continuation of a long trend—a trend coextensive with modernity, colonialism, [I add patriarchy] and geology as modern science—not a divergence or awakening. (para. 16)

For Crutzen (2006), Stoermer (and others), this new designator—which takes us from the *Holocene* to the *Anthropocene*[17]—marks the *radical shift* from the "post-glacial geological epoch of the past ten to twelve thousand years" (p. 13) to one which signifies threatening consequences of a certain (dominant/dominating) kind of human presence and activity to geological, chemical and biological Earth systems, from approximately the late 18th century—and the onset of the industrial revolution[18]. As Mike S.[19] (2014)

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[17] Anthropocene—from Greek *anthropo-* meaning human being, and –cene, Greek *kainos,* meaning new. Holocene—"Recent Whole"—from Greek *holo-* meaning whole.

[18] According to Hamilton (2012), others, such as paleoclimatologist William Ruddiman, maintain an "'early Anthropocene hypothesis'," which places its beginning "some 8,000 years ago with the onset of forest clearing and farming" (p. 2). Hamilton goes on to suggest that this is the more problematic view, in that by focusing on the intrinsic "nature" of "humankind" rather than particular social arrangements and economic practices that emerged relatively recently, the Anthropocene therefore itself becomes in some sense natural. "In this view, global warming is not the product of industrial rapaciousness, an unregulated market, human alienation from nature or excessive faith in technology; it is merely the result of humans doing what humans are meant to do, that is, using the powers Prometheus gave us to better our lot" (p. 3). See also: Ruddiman, Ellis, Kaplan, & Fuller (2015).

Zalasiewicz et al. (2014) determine that, rather than the late 18th century, "…it was from the mid-20th century that the worldwide impact of the accelerating Industrial Revolution became both global and near-synchronous." [They propose a precise boundary for the Anthropocene] in 1945 based on both a historical turning point (the

astutely comments that while the primary implication here seems to be *danger* for Crutzen, Stoermer, and others—with the Anthropocene naming "a condition of unsustainability and overshoot, a heading toward disaster"—it means very different things to others. For example, for technological fundamentalists—or "techno-optimists," as Mike S. calls them:

> the primary signification is power, overcoming and opportunity. It names a freedom from nature and constraint, a sense that as we neither rely on nor are compelled to preserve nature, we are free to design any future we wish. In this view, there are challenges (most of which will be addressed by breakthrough technologies[20]), but no fundamental crises or dangers.

Alamogordo [nuclear] test explosion) and the source of a chemostratigraphic signal. Such a boundary selection may open possibilities for historical fields other than Earth history (geology) to more easily engage in the emerging interdisciplinary science base of the Anthropocene. (p. 6)

[19] Mike S. is a screen name.

[20] Mike S. refers here to the likes of Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, founders in 2003 of The Breakthrough Institute. I'll let them speak for themselves. On their website (Breakthrough Staff, n/d.), you will find they embrace the Anthropocene, alongside their aligning philosophy—*ecomodernism*—which they define as a pragmatic philosophy, "motivated by the belief that we can protect beautiful, wild places at the same time as we ensure that the seven-going-on-ten billion people in the world can lead secure, free, and prosperous lives. Ecomodernists are optimistic about humanity's ability to shape a better future – a 'good Anthropocene'." They believe in "a vision of postenvironmentalism for the Anthropocene, the age of humans. Over the next century it is within our reach to create a world where all 10 billion humans achieve a standard of living that will allow them to pursue their dreams. But this world is only possible if we embrace human development, modernization, and technological innovation. … [W]e must once and for all embrace human power, technology, and the larger process of modernization" (Shellenberger & Nordhaus, 2011, p. 3) Additionally, say Nordhaus & Shellenberger (2007), "…we'll need a new paradigm centered on technological innovation and economic opportunity, not on nature preservation and ecological limits" (p. 33).

Frankly, in my view, this fundamentalist positioning is unhinged from reality, and horrifying. Crutzen's approach seems more nuanced than that of techno-optimists—and in some ways I can appreciate his and others' view of the Anthropocene as stemming from sincere concern. But, my instinct to reject this concept is rooted in the belief that it simply transfers and further normalizes attitudes, behaviors and practices that are mere extensions of our failed worldview—such as reinforcing central problems of false human detachment from systems and delusions of being in control.

My rejection is further affirmed as I learn of Crutzen's call for the development of geoengineering capabilities (i.e., Crutzen & Schwägerl, 2011)—even as his call is for a so-called "Plan B"—or a last resort (unlike many geoengineering enthusiasts). While the subject of geoengineering—or *climate intervention*[21]—is important, it also moves outside the scope of this paper, other than as an example of the scary "logical" extended values of an Anthropocenic age. The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) is to decide by 2016 whether to officially declare the Holocene over and the Anthropocene begun (Stromberg, 2013). Adopting the Anthropocene as our new epoch signals the continuation and domination of a delusional worldview that remains at the heart of all our institutions—including the one with which we are primary concerned here, educational. And so, I ask with Hamilton (2012) the rhetorical question, "How can we think our way

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[21] A set of new studies by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (*Climate Intervention: Carbon Dioxide Removal and Reliable Sequestration* and *Climate Intervention: Reflecting Sunlight to Cool Earth*) insists geoengineering more correctly should be called "climate intervention." The U.S.N.A.S. panel "rejects the widely used term "geoengineering." Why? Because "we felt 'engineering' implied a level of control that is illusory," explained Dr. Marcia McNutt who led the report committee. The word "intervention" makes it clearer that the "precise outcome" could not be known in advance (Romm, 2015, para. 2).

out of a problem when the problem is the way we think?" (p. 9). It seems to me that the Anthropocene is doomed also to be, as E. O. Wilson (2006) has suggested, the *Eremozoic*, or Age of Loneliness (p. 91). Perhaps it's too late, but of the two—Anthropocene or Ecozoic—the Ecozoic is the era in which I want my children and grandchildren *to live, to know in their bones, to be a part of, and to contribute to*—d.v.—*Deo volente*—as my late, deeply believing Irish mother-in-law would have it.

Research Significance, Purposes, and Core Questions

While becoming aware of the vast and intricate loss in our midst—*the shy, flightless dodo, the many-colored pigeon named the passenger, the great auk, the Eskimo curlew, the woodpecker called the Lord God Bird* (Oliver, 2008, p. 43)—and as wise teachers[22] beckon us to respond to the radical shifts happening in our world/to our Earth—I wonder: How do we allow these profundities to reach radically into our consciousness—as the most urgent form of education—so we may we be opened and empowered to change and be changed, rather than to be numbed and crippled by denial or despair (two sides of the same coin), or fearful of change itself? Biologist, E. O. Wilson, for one, compels us "to struggle"; writing 20 years ago, he said:

> [H]umanity has initiated the sixth great extinction spasm, rushing to eternity a large fraction of our fellow species in a single generation. … [E]very scrap of biological diversity is priceless, to be learned and cherished, and never to be surrendered without a struggle (1992, p. 32).

Ecological crisis as crisis of perception.

And so, it seems clear, by way of contemplating this relatively small introductory slice of our problem/opportunity of enquiry, we are living in extraordinary and—if we are honest with ourselves—urgent—even emergency times—times that call for radical transformations and transpositions in the human. We have been introduced to Berry's (1999) idea of reinventing ourselves at the species level. It is worth repeating—as a refrain: "The historical mission of our times is to reinvent the human—at the species

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[22] Many wise teachers are also our elders. Some, referenced here, are recently no longer embodied among us, i.e., Thomas Berry (1914–2009) and Val Plumwood, (1939–2008). The significance of this will become clearer as I name the subject pool for my enquiry.

level, with critical reflection, within the community of life-systems, in a time-developmental context, by means of story and shared dream experience" (p. 159). Along with the many human and more-than-human voices crying in the wilderness of our lifeworld and bodies-psyche/s-—this call to reinvent the human species motivates my work—a conundrum, a challenge, a charge and commitment I have been thinking about for more than a quarter century. So too am I motivated by Wilson's (1992) insistence to struggle; Macy's (1998) and O'Sullivan's (1999) summons to grief and affirmation; and Braidotti's (2006) provocations to a new ethics of sustainability. It is to these calls I respond, and so I dedicate my dissertation to the Great Work (Berry, 1999) of human reinvention; to the Great Turning, as conceived by Joanna Macy (1998); and to the vision and enactment of an ethics of sustainability. I do this by way of my central question: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?*[23]

In part, I seek to explore the nature of and possible directions for educational transformation at the beginning of the twenty-first century—when, as I have argued, one of humanity's most urgent tasks is to move beyond collective denial to face myriad ecological crises of mind-bending magnitude and consequence. As suggested earlier, in my personal experience of higher education, and as a parent of children who have moved through primary and secondary systems—now in high school and college—in the United States, I find these crises hardly registering, if at all, in either general curriculum content, or pedagogical practice. One central reason for their absence within our educational institutions is that we are stuck on the *treadmill of reproduction,* unable and/or unwilling

[23] I have become aware as I begin to repeat my core question, that it has, for me, the power of an invocation or mantra, and so, from here on I will repeat it more consciously, hoping it may serve, on some level, as a transformative verbal presence in my text. As a friend said to me, just asking the question carries transformational power.

to affectively question, and then change, the habitus of our dominant culture. We mostly fail to recognize the roots of these crises as metaphysical and cultural, as I believe they are, because most of us operate within them so habitually and uncritically, as we are taught to do—encoded from infancy onward, especially through our educational experiences. I have heard it said that fish don't understand the water they live in. Or, to turn to a similar metaphor—and apropos our contemplation of mass extinction—if a frog is put into a pot of water over a flame, s/he will not feel the water gradually rising to a deadly temperature. In the case of humans, we are stuck in obsolete stories of the world, and of ourselves in the world—as individuals separate from nature—while our collective habits-of-mind, as translated through behaviors, serve both as the flame under the pot, and that which prevents us from consciously experiencing the water's increasing heat—i.e., our deteriorating ecological conditions. Those who have managed to become attuned to both the flame *and* the water, and who then try to raise the alarm about the rising temperature—those who then might (perhaps in in/appropriate ways?) challenge our basic cultural operating systems—are portrayed as aberrant threats to these systems of selective tradition and power, and are often marginalized and/or condemned. (I say "selective" tradition, for there are many other traditions we need to conserve as we strive for biocultural-diversity and sustainability.)

The multiple, interfacing ecological crises we face (or not) result from unchallenged cultural systems—so are thus ultimately ontological, epistemological and existential crises for humans. They are ontological as we are conditioned to think of ourselves as individual, stable beings, often within hierarchies of value (near the "top"), with more-less fixed identities. They are epistemological as we are taught to only trust

and "know as true" what can be rationally and empirically experienced through "unbiased," objective observation and the five senses. They are existential as, on one hand, we put our faith in transcendent forces or a God that is distant and aloof; and/or we think we are condemned to be alone, separate, powerless and inconsequential.

Facing our eco-cultural problems and creating ethically sustainable adaptations and solutions requires getting out of the old, stagnant (hot!) water, and opening to a new dynamic and participatory cosmology, or cosmogenesis (the developmental, emergent universe) (Bocchi & Ceruti, 2002; LaViolette, 2004; Swimme & Berry, 1992; Teilhard de Chardin, 1959, 1964); to the elegant and irrational logic at the quantum, microcosmic, and genomic levels (e.g., Bohm, 1981, 1994; Bohm & Nichol, 2004; Capra, 1975, 1982; Laszlo, 1972, 1984; Laszlo & Seidel, 2006; McClintock, 1987; Prigogine, 1980; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984, 1997), where evolution of matter/consciousness serves up surprise and enhances mystery; and to the creativity and interdependence inherent in living systems (e.g., Bateson, 1972, 1979; Bateson & Bateson, 1987; Macy, 1991, 1998, 2007; Sheldrake, 1981, 1988). All these profound new insights into our Cosmos that flow from paradigm shifts within the sciences in the past century and a quarter—along with the creativity and labour of philosophers, theologians and artists that have run parallel to and, perhaps, sometimes foreshadowed science—have yet to infiltrate dominant institutions, such as education.

Generative and dynamic models for human becoming and belonging.

Education, as it is largely practiced in the West, *is* the treadmill, reproducing incomplete, distorted, or simply incorrect understandings of the universe, the world, and

the human. Emerging from these understandings of our universe, Earth, material bodies and consciousness, we are called to new, enlarged awarenesses of:

- Complexity of living systems (e.g., Bateson, 1972; Bertalanffy, 1973)
- Reality as event-full and a process of becoming (see Process-relational Philosophy, page 108);
- Nomadic inter-subjectivities (Braidotti, 2006);
- Rhizomatic and systemic (nonlinear) ways of thinking (e.g., Bateson, 1972; Braidotti, 2006; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005; and Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis (2008);
- The vitality, creativity, complexity, plurality and dynamism of "new materialisms" (e.g., Coole & Frost, 2010; Alaimo & Hekman, 2008);
- Immanence (e.g., Braidotti, 2006; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Faber & Stephenson, 2010; Spinoza & Curley, 1985);
- And, relatedly, panpsychism or panexperientialism (e.g., Griffin, 1998, 2007; Mathews, 2003; Skrbina, 2005), which conceptualizes all matter as having experience.

Mystery: *Eros* and *Thanatos.*

Linked to all of these modes of understanding—and necessary for our human embrace—is the inescapable and unnamable, generous and generative, awe-inspiring and beautiful Moving Mysterious at the heart of all—in Eastern thought/practice, known as the *Dao*. I am reminded of my former teacher, Dr. Mary Schmitt, a neurophysiologist, nun, and rebel, who was enthralled by the mystery and potentials of evolving

consciousness. She spoke contagiously of the quantum-to-cosmic continuum as *minds within minds within minds*.

Perhaps in order to face our multiple crises, and to open fully to these new exciting possibilities of relationship and becoming within the Cosmos and the Earth—including within human and more-than-human communities—we must first move through denial to Love, through despair and grief, enter Mystery more consciously—the dance of *Eros* and *Thanatos,* and trust in the generative vitality and relationship of *zoe and bios*. Briefly, I refer here to terms proposed by Braidotti (2006)—*zoe* and *bios*—to denote different facets of Life. *Zoe* is the "generative vitality of non- or pre-human or animal life"; it "stands for the mindless [sic] vitality of Life carrying on independently of and regardless of rational control (p. 37). As I understand Braidotti, *bios* is Life as humans project and reflect upon it through a cultural-discursive lens, and therefore Life becomes political and contested.

At least implicitly, metaphors of *Eros* and *Thanatos* are in sustained dialogue throughout my dissertation. Along with exploring death and grief in relationship to our resistances to or motivations for paradigmatic change, I am interested in the role of Love or *Eros*[24]—and how this experience intersects with *Thanatos*, death and grief. How do

[24] "A loving [Buberian] I-Thou relationship, says Bateson, is possible between humans and their societies and ecosystems. Thus we can recover the possibility of love between each other, within ourselves, and in the wider world. We can recover the processes of religious engagement without any need for transcendent divinity" (Charlton, 2008 p. 160). In reading Thom van Dooren*,* I was struck by his reference to Emmanuel Levinas, who thought of philosophy as the "wisdom of love" rather than the love of wisdom. "Levinas says that philosophy is the wisdom of love in the service of love" (Beals, 2007, p. 14). Michael Soulé (2007), "It all boils down to what we love and we save what we love and if we don't love it, we're going to allow it to disappear and go extinct" (para. 50).

human experiences and awarenesses of Love and Death figure into eco- and cosmological consciousness? What has education got to do with these essential human experiences, which are for the most part publicly unacknowledged, unexamined, and even firmly denied—especially in an age of mass extinction? What are the roles of love and perishing in fostering wisdom?

As I set out to better understand education in these perilous times—hopefully, to make some small contribution to its re-vision—my thoughts are, in part, a response to Macy's (1998) stirring insights. She speaks a truth, which is at the heart of my *raison d'etre* for this research and writing:

> To be conscious in our world today is to be aware of vast suffering and unprecedented peril.… The feelings that assail us now cannot be equated with ancient dreads of mortality…. Their source lies less in concerns for the personal self than in apprehensions of collective suffering…. It is the distress we feel on behalf of the larger whole of which we are a part. It is the pain of the world itself, experienced in each of us. // No one is exempt from that pain…. That pain is the price of consciousness in a threatened and suffering world. It is not only natural; it is an absolutely necessary component of our collective healing.… The problem … lies not in our pain for the world, but in our repression of it. (Macy, 1998. p. 26-27)

Research Questions

The intertwining core questions for my enquiry were largely inspired by my contemplation of the following:

> In evaluating our present situation I submit that we have already terminated the Cenozoic Era of the geo-biological systems of the planet. Sixty-five million years of life development are terminated. Extinction is taking place throughout the life systems on a scale unequaled since the terminal phase of the Mesozoic Era. (Berry, 1991, para. 22)
>
> [W]hat does it mean to be a member of the species that is now causing this huge cascade of extinction on Earth? What ethics and obligations does that call from us? What does it ask us to rethink about who we are, and how we fit? (Rose & van Dooren, 2009)
>
> What is it like to write in a time of exterminations and active killings? What is it like to write in a time of extinction without going apocalyptic? What is it like to be responsible in a time of unprecedented mass death of both industrial and non-industrial kinds? (Rose, D. B. quoted by Haraway, D., 2009)

The question at the heart of my enquiry.

What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?

Just a few of many related questions.

Working by way of process, I have experienced the involution[25] of the following set of entangled questions, which early in my thinking sprang from my central question. I cannot claim to have answered these questions directly—any answers to them are likely other questions, too—but, I feel compelled to leave them here as propositions, and lures for feeling.

- What does it mean to educate while contemplating the possible extinction of the human?
- What is the role of an educational leader in the transitional phase from the *Cenozoic* era to the *Ecozoic* era, from the *Holocene* to the *Anthropocene* geological epochs?
- How can education facilitate the transformation or transpositions of worldviews, to include an ethic of sustainability, and the evolution of consciousness that will affirm and promote life?
- How do (unconscious) fear, despair and grief play out in our mis/education system; how might they be key to the re-development of an eco-cosmological consciousness in the human? How are gratitude and celebration also key? (The dance of Death and Love…)
- How can the creative/expressive arts enlighten and enliven an educational paradigm, which acts to:

[25] *Involution* (via Bergson and Deleuze) can be thought as differing from *evolution*, in that involution enfolds into its process its past, whereas we think of evolution moving in a linear and progressive direction, surpassing that which came before. We might think of the involutionary process as similar to Whiteheadian *prehension*.

- Connect humans to our ecological and cosmological brokenness (soul loss[26])—reviving, in the process, love of nature, the Earth, the Cosmos; and a sense of the sacred[27];
- (Re)awaken an ecological/cosmological consciousness in the human, including connection to the local ecologies of our embodied in/dwelling/s;
- And, transform worldviews to become perceptually embedded and embodied in a reenchanted or re-ensouled Cosmos—*a living, responsive psychic reality*[28].

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[26] Like Hillman, I define "soul" not as "a substantial, underlying entity but the quality of existence that gives meaning and vitality to our experience" (Knill, Levine, & Levine, 2005, p. 53). Therefore, I think of 'soul loss' as the diminished or lost capacity of connection to awe, wonder, reverence, love, and meaning.

[27] I used the term sacred here in the spirit of Bateson, who "suggests that when we have recognized our interconnective membership within the biotic world, we can learn to see the total living system itself as divinity or as the sacred. …Bateson's thinking may now enable, for all of us, a rediscovery of sacred process. This will not be a religion such as we have known but a way, at once new and very ancient, of offering respect, reverence, awe, and love for and in the ongoing relating that is the informational process of the material world, the relating that enables life" (Charlton, 2008 p. 159).

[28] James Hillman (1981) says, "I can no longer distinguish clearly between neurosis of self and neurosis of world, psychopathology of self and psychopathology of world. Moreover, it tells me that to place neurosis and psychopathology solely in personal reality is a delusional repression of what is actually, realistically, being experienced" (p. 93). He argues that in order to heal the world, we must return psychic reality to the world; the world must be re-ensouled (p. 102). It is our imaginative recognition of and aesthetic response to things with our hearts (p. 105-108) that animates the world and returns it to soul—to a living, responsive psychic reality.

Purpose and Significance

Re-storying the world.

> [W]e find ourselves … trapped inside a runaway narrative, headed for the worst kind of encounter with reality. In such a moment, writers, artists, poets and storytellers of all kinds have a critical role to play. … Words and images can change minds, hearts, even the course of history. Their makers shape the stories people carry through their lives, unearth old ones and breathe them back to life, add new twists, point to unexpected endings. It is time to pick up the threads and make the stories new, as they must always be made new, starting from where we are. (Hine & Kingsnorth, 2009, para. 36)

As discussed in some depth earlier, our contemporary problems—which happen to be existential—are rooted in old stories we keep telling ourselves (reproduced through systems of education) that, among other æffects, "cripple our imaginations, politics, and democracy" (Giroux, 2014, p. 24)—stories about who we are as human beings, our purpose for being, our ways of knowing, what reality is or is not, what is of value or not, our ideas of an exclusively transcendent Divinity; and how we relate to nature, to ourselves *as* nature, to others (human-to-human and human to more-than-human—our solidarities and antipathies), and to the Cosmos. Education in the Western world—and more often worldwide, as global capitalism dictates educational policy, content and method—reproduces these old stories that engender individualism, greed, fear, ignorance, inequality, injustice, violence and ecological destruction. Add to this the insight of Hine and Kingsnorth (2009), that "what makes [these stories] so dangerous is that, for the most part, we have forgotten that [they are stories]" (para 32). We need a cultural re-storying that enlarges and enlivens our imaginations—which provides "a different sense of how

the world is narrated," "unsettle[s] common sense [and] challenge[s] the commonplace"—and "make[s] knowledge meaningful in order to make it critical and transformative" (Giroux, 2014, p. 23). I know these stories are already being fashioned, as well as re-fashioned from the dormant wisdom of old mythologies, and the living wisdom of some indigenous cultures. New or renewed, our stories must spring from our deepest and wisest moral imagination—and remain, as Giroux says, "never completed but…always open to refection, capable of pushing even further the boundaries of our collective imagination" (p. 24).

As part of this re-storying process, Bowers (e.g., 1995, 2001, 2012) emphasizes the importance of interrogating "root metaphors" and language processes that shape cultural practices—our "cultural ways of knowing encoded in metaphorical constructions" (2001, p. 197). Consider, for instance, the following clichés that metaphorically represent some of our outmoded stories, and that detrimentally translate as rugged individualism, anthropocentricism, and patriarchy. They share in common the æffect of distancing the human from nature/cosmos and humans from each other. *We must compete to get ahead. Natural "resources" are for human utilization/consumption. Human nature is ultimately selfish and greedy and violent. "Sacrifice zones" and war are necessary to maintain "our way of life." Progress is always better. God helps those that help themselves. God gave humans dominion over the Earth. Humans are just below God, and women and animals are below men in the pinnacle of the Great Chain of Being. Technology will save us.*

Mere reforms—just tinkering around the edges of a flawed and fatal worldview—are woefully insufficient for the complex problems that humans have created and now must face. We need consciousness-shifting visions of education that emerge from the

nexus of ecology and other system sciences, philosophy, cosmology, social justice, political economy, Art, and engaged spirituality. These visions call for "a transformative restructuring of educational institutions at all levels that will enlarge our viewpoint beyond the marketplace to the planet and all creatures" (Hill & Johnston, 2003, p. 21). Realizing this vision includes worldviews that incorporate the sacred or spiritual dimension, understood as the embodied consciousness of something greater than ourselves, and a sense that we are interconnected, and embedded in creation.

Since, as climate scientist James Hanson (quoted in Lynch & NASA, 2011) instructs, "Humans have overwhelmed the natural, slow changes that occur on geologic timescales" (para. 14)—and that even our "most optimistic" climate future, with a minimal 2˚C increase in average global temperature, is a "prescription for disaster" (para. 5)—it may well be too late (for humans) to "re-story our world" (Holden, 2009, title & para. 5)—that is, conceive and embody new stories about reality, purpose, value, etc. Yet, these new stories, in tandem with the vigorous re-visioning of education, are perhaps our only hope, and key to the struggle to which Wilson (1992) calls us—and to the Great Work of Berry's (1999) vision. I believe in the power of both education and Art (all the better if they are enacted together) to create and teach these "new stories" that emerge from contemporary scientific understandings of the world and Cosmos—that also happen to mirror many indigenous cosmologies (LaViolette, 2004; Suzuki & Knudtson, 1992, p. 226). These transposed and transpositional stories would signal a healthy renewal of culture (understood as a continuous process)—perhaps *creating and becoming* in qualitative leaps through the involution of consciousness—and the possibility of sustainable Earth-human relationships, with more justice and peace in the world. In part,

my research explores possible paths to the creation and embodiment of new stories, as suggested in the paragraph below.

It feels mighty presumptuous to imagine that my thinking and creating (and leading) by way of this research might helpfully contribute to *re-storying the world* (Holden, 2009) and to affective and affirmative educational vision. Yet—as I nomadically engage with broadly conceived "texts"—searching, dialoguing with, interpreting, story-telling, and art-making—emergent in dreams, imagination, and enactments of encounter—it is my hope that this project serves, with others, to contribute in some small way. In the end, perhaps, I may "only" be dreaming; yet, I keep in heartmind my wise teacher, Thomas Berry (1999), who often said, "The dream drives the action" (p. 201).

I have kept in front of me the following words by Edmund O'Sullivan (2003) as I have contemplated my enquiry. (O'Sullivan, incidentally, was also a student of Berry.) They succinctly reach to the heart of what I believe needs to be the intrinsic aim of all educational endeavors—individually and systemically—in order for *homo sapiens* to remain as a strand in the web of life. My research purpose and significance follow from this sentiment.

> Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awarenesses,

> our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy. (p. 327)

And so, as we modulate from our First to Second Movement, I want to consider a final thought about the purpose and significant of this research. Please consider with me…

Emergency Education in a Time of Educational Emergency: Toward Emergent Education and Educating for Emergence…

> We have walked out of our burning house and we are now headed off the edge of a cliff. Beyond that cliff is an abyss of economic and political disorder on a scale that no one has ever seen before. I call this coming time the Long Emergency. … Americans are woefully unprepared for the Long Emergency. (Kunstler, 2005, p. 1-2)

In *The long emergency: Surviving the converging catastrophes of the twenty-first century*, James Howard Kunstler (2005) imagines the grim intricacies of a possible—some say likely—not-too-distant future world that results from "multiple cascading crises" (Jensen, 2013), where human systems and institutions as we know them today have largely collapsed in the context of human-induced ecosystem collapses. For instance, he profoundly disrupts all we accept "as absolutely normative and inevitable" (p. 271) with regard to the current model of education in the United States. Consider, for instance, that "huge centralized suburban schools …will rapidly become obsolete" (p. 272); that "many colleges and universities may close down, and the scale of those that remain may have to contract severely"; or that "only a tiny minority of young people will be able to

enjoy a college education" (p. 272), which will "simply cease to be the mass 'consumer' activity it has become" (p. 274).

Kunstler's intent in writing *The long emergency* is not to assert predictive powers, but to exercise a hope that it might help spur the American public to "wake up from its sleepwalk and act to defend the project of civilization" (p. 2). "Even in the face of epochal discontinuity," he says, "there is a lot we can do…to be able to imagine a hopeful future, especially in times of maximum stress and change" (p. 2).

It is in the context of the Long Emergency—while also borrowing from concepts of Stanislav and Christina Grof (1989), who have studied and written about "spiritual emergencies"—that I have come to think of this research as responding to an "educational emergency" in time of mass extinction. The Grofs have identified "spiritual emergencies" as a descriptor for conditions experienced by individuals who are undergoing dramatic personal transformations of consciousness that can appear or can be interpreted as mental health crises—that are often then pathologized and medicated, with the results being that transformation is stymied. Spiritual emergencies can appear as chaotic and overwhelming periods when one's sense of identity is breaking down, old values no longer hold true, and/or the cultural foundations of these realities are profoundly shifting. I also borrow from the Grofs the play on words "emergency" (an acute crisis) and "emergence" (budding, arising or arrival).

And so if we think in terms of educational emergency, we might think of our educational culture and institutions as chaotic and overwhelmed (despite pretenses of control and order)—certainly in turmoil for all matter of reasons of dysfunction—but perhaps actually reeling with an underlying desire for and creative impulse toward transposition—with an autopoietic response to times that are crying out for humans to see

the world anew. The job of educational leaders (as opposed to educational managers and administrators) is to listen deeply to the needs of the (failing) system—within (failing) systems—and to in/appropriately help midwife transpositions. To do otherwise is to commit malpractice by medicating, pacifying and terminating[29] the existential cry for deep, radical change in the system. An educational emergency—which we clearly have—calls for emergency education—emergent education that educates for emergence.

And so, in part, I think of the significance and purpose of this research is its proposal for serious consideration and even adoption—by educational leaders, teachers, parents, and researchers—of in/appropriate education in a time of mass extinction—as an *urgent care* response needed for our educational emergency, for emergent/cy education.

[29] Some of the ways we "medicate, pacify and terminate" might be: reducing and standardizing curriculum; teaching to the test; slicing away recess, the Arts, the humanities, and social studies; obsessive/exclusive focus on S.T.E.M. subjects; compliantly accepting regressive policies, demoralizing teachers and becoming demoralized; putting ever more layers of bureaucracy in place, with more administrators in control; by starving budgets, etc.—and yes, by literally medicating.

Second Movement

Introduction to the Project and Methodology in Two Parts:

Motivation, Method & Reading the Score

Part I: Program Notes for an *Imbroglio:* Instructions for 'Listening' While Nomadically Wandering Through an In/Appropriate Dissertation

> ***Imbroglio*** ~ '[from Italian (pronounced imˈbrōlyō/) ("tangle")] ~ 1. A confused heap. 2. A state of great confusion and *entanglement; a complicated or difficult situation* (esp. political or dramatic); a confused misunderstanding or disagreement, embroilment. 3. *A passage, in which the vocal or instrumental parts are made to sing, or play, against each other, in such a manner as to produce the effect of apparent but really well-ordered confusion'* (Grove Dict. Music 1880) (Oxford English Dictionary, italics added). 'A scene, usually occurring in a comic opera, in which the illusion of confusion is created by means of polyphonic complexity and rhythmic, metric, and melodic diversity' (Harvard Dictionary of Music). Also, '*a passage in which the rhythms of different voice-parts are conflicting or contradictory*' (The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia).[30]

[30] See Appendix A for reference details for this and other definitions and etymologies.

> "Deleuze-Guattarian 'chaosmos' [describes] the effects of deterritorialization[31]: 'composed chaos, neither foreseen nor preconceived'" (p. 204), and precipitates new ways of thinking and acting: 'once one ventures outside what's familiar and reassuring, one has to invent new concepts for unknown lands' (Allan, 2007, p. 63, quoting Deleuze).

Dear Reader,

Having established our problem/opportunity of enquiry—*What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?*—we now need to consider our project from the standpoint of narrative and writing methods, for it has probably already become clear that this dissertation veers from the well-trodden path of established norms. Of reasons this is so—none are more important than the very times in which we are living and living-into—which call for moving radically beyond convention in all manner of ways that we think about and conduct ourselves in a world that is, quite literally, diminishing before our eyes. My question and problem of enquiry, the manners in which I have conducted my research, and the final form this dissertation has taken are all sensibly and intimately related—having together un/folded, as I have tried honestly and honorably to respond—within a collaborative community of other scholars, educators, artists, activists, and

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[31] According to Parr (2010), *deterritorialization* is "a coming undone," "**a movement producing change**," "inheres in a territory as a transformative vector; hence it is tied to **the very possibility of change immanent to a given territory**" (p. 69). An example **in music**: Composer Olivier Messiaen used birdsong in his compositions. "In these works [Messiaen] did not just imitate the song of birds; rather he brought birdsong into relation with the piano in a manner that transformed the territory of the musical instrument (piano) and the birdsong itself" (p. 70). [Words in bold are my intentional emphasis. Their function is described on page 84.]

research participants—to the call for radically revisioning[32] our human presence on a destabilized planet. You could say I have been called by subjects-matter and my own situatedness to be inappropriate by convention, while my intuitions and decisions regarding scholarship are appropriate by conditions of time and context. In short, our historical moment—with the greatest urgency—requires of us to reconsider why, how and for whom we do research, in a time of mass extinction. It is the tension between what is usually thought of as inappropriate in light of traditional or habitual thought, standard practice and "polite society"—and what is appropriate and necessary for creating and adopting new behaviors and practices for "the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible" (Eisenstein, 2013)—that restively resides in the word in/appropriate[33].

And so, having established my principal reason for deviating from standard practices and form, and as we embark together on this quest into what may seem at the outset like *terra incognita*—it is appropriate that I, as composer and guide, should prepare you a little for the winding journey ahead—for encountering text, tone, and textures that follow.

As we set out, it will probably be easier if you, for now, to simply suspend expectations you may have concerning dissertations—such as the *de rigueur* five chapters, and strict conformity to APA guidelines. For instance, because of the nature of my research questions and process, as well as its presentation, my dissertation does not neatly fit a traditional five-chapter framework. This departure has precedence (see, for

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[32] This revisioning is, of course, a huge project and process needing many bodyheartminds—so I am deeply aware that my effort here, by necessity, can only be a very modest contribution to a much greater effort that needs all hands on deck.

[33] The role of the typographical oblique or virgule will be explained in detail in further text. See page 88.

example, Springgay et al., 2005; and Springgay et al., 2008). Keeping in mind, as Rosi Braidotti (2011) reminds us, that "musical scores function by transpositions of genetic information" (p. 234), we shall, instead of chapter designations, proceed through a series of movements—adopting a musical motif—One through Eight, plus Prelude, Cadenza, and Coda.

One example of my departure includes a distributed literature review, whereby, in an effort to avoid creating false separations within the document as a whole, I weave or integrate the literature into the whole of my document. Part of my rationale for attempting this integration is inherent in the philosophies that inform my conceptual framework and methodology, whereby transdisciplinary, process-relational, phenomenological, hermeneutic, and arts-informed approaches to enquiry embody and elicit emergence, complexification, plurality, and the blurring of firm boundaries. My aims are toward working against a mechanistic, reductionist process/product; are intrinsic to my research questions; and, I suspect, are strongly implicated in the "answers" to my questions.

It is not that I ignore standard guidelines altogether (I indeed comply where I am able), or that I intend insult to anyone in the process of challenging regulations. It's just that the work itself has jumped boundaries and contravened code in order to live and thrive—to become. I believe at least two important functions of allowing for this process—following the work itself—which I later elaborate and name a *hermeneutics of becoming*—are the receptive attitude of creative gestation it engenders, and potential ways in which "gaps in the research" can be concurrently and perpetually discovered and addressed, while also allowing or making way for the next "fructile" (Turner, 1990, p.

11) gap—so that, in a sense and in æffect, "the gap" doesn't exist to be filled or closed, but to morph into some new shape and/or energy.

You may also expect to encounter other anomalies as we go—and by way of encounter, perhaps a shift in perspective—imagined or experienced new or renewed horizons. For instance, this dissertation is not normal in the sense of reflecting typical social science research. For reasons that should become clearer in later discussion of transdisciplinarity (an element of my conceptual framework), this work draws from and attempts to integrate multiple disciplinary categories and strategies. So while beginning our journey in the loamy soil of social sciences, we will also often wander into the humanities, and, even make short excursions into other sciences.

As I emphasize throughout this work—with the expansively entwined themes of education and mass extinction at its conceptual heart—we are living in and into times, climates and territories that are decidedly *not normal—and that are sure to become increasingly and relatively rapidly more abnormal or even anti-normal*—as educational and other long familiar conventions, habits and habitats would have it. Indeed, many of these normalized institutionalized standards—attitudes, behaviors, forms and formulae—may be implicated in contributing to and perpetuating the multifaceted existential crises we face. Whether we like, approve of, or are comfortable with them or not—we are living in/to times that demand, at the very least, experimental departures from various institutionalized educational and scholarly habits (epistemological, ideological, methodological, re/presentational). Actually, I think we can be confident that we—and even more so our young and the not-yet-born—are all in for, at the very least,

uncomfortable times ahead. Indeed, multiple unspeakable tragedies[34] not only loom on our horizons, they are already in-progress, leaving destruction and suffering in their wake. But I also believe that radical changes demanded of us are not in themselves necessarily bad—and can even be joyfully anticipated and negotiated—which is not to say they will be easy, or that suffering and grieving will cease. In short, we really don't know what we are capable of in terms of aligning ourselves with new and renewed[35] ways of thinking, feeling, making and doing. Can we even "reinvent the human at the species level" (Berry, 1999)?

Returning to the research at hand, I'll emphasize that while the aforementioned experimental departures require audacity, they must also be studiously ethical—to include a widening circle of ethical concern. Rest assured that throughout the production of this particular nonconforming work, I have remained faithful to all ethical standards as set out by and agreed upon with the Institutional Review Board at my university (granted, a charge more easily fulfilled having been permitted "exempt" status by the IRB). Even so, I believe a heightened sense of ethical consideration has been present throughout my process, actually driving this project from its conception. (Please see related Appendix B: *Thoughts on Trustworthiness, Bias, Strengths, and Limitations.*) My boundary-breaching has mostly consisted of (non-scientific) experimental method, epistemological adventure,

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[34] Including wars that are waged over diminishing resources—oil, water, land, etc.

[35] Not all human cultures are in need of radical revision, and so I think of this *renewal* as a kind of cosmological recalibration of our species. This would entail both a humbling/ healing process of reconcilation and reparation by imperial/dominator cultures, and receptivity to and deep learning from cultural/wisdom traditions—i.e. indigenous ones—ways of knowing and doing—of living lightly and sustainably on the earth—as embedded creatures among other creatures, within ecological systems and an integral cosmology.

aesthetic wandering, authorial deviance, and intentional writerly transgression. My breach of code has been intellectually, aesthetically, and methodologically determined, not merely rebellious for rebelliousness sake.

Though I knew from the beginning of this project that I wanted to lean into once anomalous—but increasingly legitimate and respected—arts-informed or arts-based scholarly research, I did not set out to write an in/appropriate dissertation. Rather, it *became-in/appropriate*—a process that should become clearer as the work unfolds. This becoming-in/appropriate began as a deep encounter with my own bodyheartmind—a thinking-sensing-feeling-dreaming into and interacting with both my research question and process. Becoming-in/appropriate would then be affirmed and enhanced by ten retired/retiring university professors who served as participants in an arts-informed research encounter that now inhabits the heart of this enquiry—which, in turn, led further into the in/appropriate work now in your hands—including its naming.

Questing and questioning over the past many moons led me on a meandering, rhizomatic, and thus decidedly nonlinear—though intricately patterned—journey. Sometimes I got lost in the dark. While lost, I mostly trusted that the pattern was still there, even in the dark. When the pattern became dim, I was impelled to otherwise-sense or feel it. I think I can say that I nearly always emerged from having "gone missing" (*sub-terra*) with new insight and ideas. It might have been a dream in the middle of the night that led to fresh ways of seeing emergent details of the pattern; sometimes it was the arrival of a poem or art-piece—all which then became data to be considered and implicitly—sometimes explicitly—integrated into the work. This, as it turns out, is actually beautifully consistent with a process-relational philosophic approach to research,

which we will explore in more depth through these pages.

As we wander together, you will undoubtedly note variations in writing style, as I consciously and unconsciously (or un/consciously) modulate tone, texture, tempo and temperament between various, sometimes overlapping writerly voices. Some examples may include the plaintive three-o'clock-in-the-morning or the alarmed-midday voice, winter or spring voice, the lost-in-the-forest or bogged-down voice. You may detect an odd-sense-of-humor or surprised-by-insight voice—as well as the more traditional seemingly-detached scholarly voice. I hope you might consider with me that all of these voices, in chorus, are scholarly in æffect.[36]

If any of these voices come across at times as defensive in tone, I hope you will pause to consider the differences—perhaps subtle—between defensiveness and vulnerability. While wanting to avoid defensiveness (and even to avoid *defending*—the language of fortresses and barriers—which also often implies violence), I am quite

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[36] While it is probably true that I occasionally unconsciously slip into an apologetic tone, I'll ask that you consider this a manifestation of someone hoping and trying herself to become-transposed, while becoming-scholar—a process which, in large measure, requires resisting—*going against the tide of*—a lifetime of both expert and haphazard conditioning in the dominant (dominator) paradigm of Western education and culture. It is certainly not always a comfortable or self-confident process—as is likely, sometimes awkwardly, reflected in at least some of the voices you'll encounter in these pages. And that odd-sense-of-humor-voice I mentioned? Well, it is true. This work is not at all funny—but is occasionally fun, in the sense of enjoyable and deeply gratifying. One could even say that without measures of fun and humor—and the creation of therapeutic and liminal spaces of "ambivalent festive laughter" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 118)—this project—centrally focused as it is on mass extinction, love and grief—would be doomed to failure from the start. Can we become-transposed in this world—while helping to transpose each other and our embedded human systems—without sometimes laughing at ourselves (between cries)? This is something I am certain I need to do much more: Learn to not take myself/ourselves too seriously—while going about the most serious and important work in the world I can imagine. ◠

conscious of the demand for willing scholarly and artistic vulnerability—of significant risk-taking—as I try to break out of strictures of conventional theory, practice and form—in search of something new. Vulnerability implies softness, exposure, porousness, and/or openness (including to possible wounds and/or wounding)—a decisive relational orientation, and therefore a bearing, perhaps, more available for and conducive to empathy, compassion and transformation.[37]

It is considering Voice, modulating and transpositioning, while also preparing for a circuitous path that prompts me to suggest that you also think of our journey as a musical one. While risking proliferating metaphors[38], the metaphor of music—and even music itself—keeps intervening in my process, so I best heed this lure, as I attempt to compose, orchestrate, improvise with, sustain, and conduct many unruly notes, voices, textures, timbres, cadences, tempos, movements.... What (musical) terrain lies ahead—and with what order should we expect this *imbroglio* to unfold? Put on your best hiking boots (or may I advise going barefoot?—we won't be rushing, and you'll want to touch the earth), grab your walking stick, perk up your inner ear, and follow along.

Listen care-fully as we move through the changing landscape, soundscape, and the changing light and seasons. May I suggest that you let yourself be moved—rather

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[37] I recall my former teacher, Dr. Mary Schmitt, who, in explaining the concept of bifurcation in chaos theory, spoke of the gush-stage of metamorphosis—the gooey—and vulnerable—state of potential and creativity between the creature-that-is-caterpillar and the creature-that-is-butterfly.

[38] Laurel Richardson (1997) reminds us that the use of "[m]etaphor [in research] is not merely an ornamentation or grace note: It **conveys cognitive content**" (p. 43); while Romanyshyn (2010) instructs: "The cultivation of a metaphoric sensibility is [the] first step toward making a place for the unconscious [in research]. Insofar as that first step requires the capacity to hear the other, **making a place for the unconscious also involves an education in learning how to listen**" (p. 107).

than merely convinced or unconvinced? The ground will sometimes feel unstable (because it just is); we will experience varying altitudes, amplitudes and weathers. While you may choose to jump from a height[39], I promise not to push you off any cliffs! Expect interludes, detours, dissonances, dreams, meditations, improvisations, poetry, reports, roars and howls and growls, keening and humming, harmonies, weeping, laughter, and silence—as deep a silence 𝄐 as you can fathom.[40] I imagine at times it may feel like we are backsliding, sometimes bushwhacking, sometimes leaping over ruins in the desert—sometimes, hopefully, pausing near a cool oasis. If you become winded from a climb, frightened by a descent, exhausted by the dance, or perhaps even bored, take time to catch your breath. Breathe. Pause in the text for contemplation[41]. There will be, occasionally, intentional pauses or notes of duration, indicated by *fermata:* 𝄐 .

The late James Hillman (1998) asked, "What can stir our depths equal to the depths of ecological need?" To which he replied, "Duty, wonder, respect, guilt, and the fear of extinction are not enough. … Only love…a desire for the world that affords the

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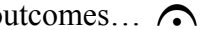
[39] Two common motifs in dreams during the course of this research are my having to negotiate frightening heights—as well as icy, slippery surfaces.

[40] Some of these—e.g. interludes, detours, dreams, poetry, reports, silences—are concurrently organizational and aesthetic/poetic devices, to be clarified in more detail in Part II of this Second Movement, and in our Fifth Movement.

[41] *contemplation* ~ (n.) from *con-* ("with") + *templum* ("shrine, area for auspices"). c.1200, "religious musing," from Old French *contemplation* or directly from Latin *contemplationem* (nominative *contemplatio*) "**act of looking at**," from *contemplat-*, past participle stem of *contemplari* "to **gaze attentively**, observe," originally "to **mark out a space** for observation" (as an augur does). From con-, intensive prefix (see con-), + templum "**area for the taking of auguries**" (see temple)) (etymologyonline). ***Augury*** (OED): The art of the augur n.: the **practice of divining from the flight of birds**, etc.; divination; **Foreboding** from tokens, presentiment, **anticipation**; An augural observation, ceremony, or **rite**; Skill in divining from omens; **prophetic** skill; Indication or **signification of the future** afforded by any thing; **presage**, promise.

vitality, the passionate interest in which all other efforts rest" (p. 266). And so, as you read, I invite you to settle into Love—and into your deepest desire for the world—even if…indeed…

You may find it in/appropriate
while reading a dissertation
to be asked to consider Love—
how your love is also your grief—æffective
as a most significant form
of embodied wisdom—
this despite centuries-long exile
from institutions of un/reason
You may think it in/appropriate—
while at once discerning
a becoming-scholar's work—
to meet reason muddled with feeling—in/appropriate
to be asked to relate to her or your own
subjective I and subjunctive moods
to imagine a subjective We
that is greater than us
You may find it positive(istical)ly in/appropriate to weep
with longing, and for beauty—the passing away
of pachyderms, Slender-billed vultures,
Whooping cranes and Great Blue whales,
Leatherback turtles, *Homo sapiens sapiens*—
Habitats, tunes, and tongues
of *all* the children
You may find it dis/concerting to stumble into Art
the poetry of clowns and fools—
even perhaps your own vulnerability
in the silences between
conjured tones
and text
You may think it in/appropriate
to be re-minded in mid-judgment—
dis/placed from disciplined assessment
by remembering beloved
faces, or places—once sacred
perhaps now desecrated spaces—

ransomed for a world
we mistakenly imagined
would be better
easier
enlightened
nobler
You may find it in/efficient
to splash through footnotes
consider the eggs of words
wander into and out of dreams,
in/appropriate to be asked
to pause for reverence or irreverence
It may well be in/appropriate to be asked
to think with your heart
embodied—
as you puzzle and ponder,
assess form and method,
contemplate theory—above all
outcomes… 

As I conclude these instructions and forewarnings, a final note asks to be struck, as I am led to another possible transgression of this work.

At the "conclusion" of this work, I am to receive a Doctorate of Education—*Doctor Educationis*—a research degree so-called "practical," "applied," or "vocational"—which, in unfortunate binaristic terms—sometimes with maligning results—are (not just) conceptually pitted against "scholarly" or "theoretical" dissertations by some in the academy. In a twist, there are also those who hold the "applied" standard as sacrosanct, so I am aware that some might criticize this work for failing to sufficiently produce or suggest *practical* outcomes. While it may not at first be obvious, I'd like to suggest that there are great possibilities for theory and philosophy—especially as aesthetically conceived and artfully/artistically expressed—to have practical, applied and vocational outcomes, especially in these difficult times of great

precarity and ideological fixity. It might be even argued, as I do here, that it is only when one has discovered/ been lured towards such "true" vocation—a *calling* at once philosophically, ethically, spiritually, and aesthetically informed and inspired—that one may consciously and justly apply (and imagine/create new) thoroughly embodied practical/applied talents and skills we all need to fulfill a "good"—shared and sustainable—life. Perhaps this process partly involves becoming as young children again—with practices of presence, curiosity, wonder, enchantment and trust—all qualities of attendance to the world enhanced by way of *poiesis*[42]—the making of Arts (in its broadest sense)—a cutting through inculcated standards of economic, socio-political and religious ideologies—to heal and recover a love of and desire for learning, and allurement by and into the world/cosmos. Imagine with me the very possible *applied power—with profound practical consequences*—of theory with art and craft; philosophy with song and birdsong and frogsong; story and encounter with planting and harvesting; and dreams, the imagination, and "language immersion" in "nature"—to move a heart, to deeply touch a person's soul, to change the chemistry of a brain—so that perceptual lenses are cleansed, sense-apertures opened, new perspectives offered, a worldview expanded, a paradigm shifted. Imagine what new *vocations* and *professions—spiritual callings* and *solemn commitments,* in these words' respective etymological senses—might arise then to influence our world in all manner of hopeful ways. I do not know if my own

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[42] *Poïesis* (n.d.) ~ "(Ancient Greek: ποίησις) is etymologically derived from the ancient term ποιέω, which means "to make." This word, the root of our modern "poetry", was first a verb, an action that transforms and continues the world. Neither technical production nor creation in the romantic sense, ***poïetic* work reconciles thought with matter and time, and person with the world**." (Consciously, for the moment at least, I refer to Wikipedia's definition of *poiesis*, as it is pithy and beautifully said. Other references will emerge in later text.)

work in these pages has this practical theoretical and/or aesthetic power, but this is my sincere hope.

And so from these missive crosscurrents, we now move into an alchemical autoecographic interlude before wandering through more methodological territory. We will then study, in Movement Three, the cartography of our journey's conceptual and philosophical terrain, as we continue to address the principle question—*What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?*— that arises from the sweeping scope of our problem/opportunity of enquiry.

With love,

Susan

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: *Reflections on the Crucible of Now*

> We are determining the future at this very moment. / We now know that the heart is the philosophers' stone. (Williams, 2013)

As I sit here staring out the window, clumsily clutching at words to begin again—and again—while also trying to keep a certain terror at bay—I remember an image of the crucible that came to me in the middle of last night, and I think, perhaps this is good metaphor, in this moment—the moment that is Now, that also envelops the historical moment—for the challenge of collecting and interpreting my data and articulating narratives for education in a time of mass extinction. A friend sends me a call for participation in a conference, written by Whiteheadian scholars, which reads: "We face the possibility of an irreversible end of civilization and even of the human species." These words or very similar ones, in various iterations, are becoming evermore common in my reading. And they are in the air, if not on lips. They are not merely alarmist. "There is a generalized sense now that the future we expected is not working," said Ivan Illich (2009) in an 1989 interview, "...we are in front of what Michel Foucault has called an 'epistemic break'—a sudden image-shift in consciousness in which the unthinkable becomes thinkable" (p. 81). Later he adds, "Perhaps for the first time, we can now imagine that, as Samuel Beckett

Dream narrative
Fall 2011 ~ Somehow "the institution" has mapped my DNA, and, with it, has developed an offspring for which I am responsible. (Do I give birth to it?) I am walking through the cold, up a long and broad, spiraled flight of stairs. I am carrying this premature, fragile baby through the cold, sheltering it at my heart, trying to keep it warm and alive. I am ambivalent because of its questionable origins, but I love it…

once put it, 'this earth could be uninhabited'" (p. 82). What is the heartmind to do with this sudden new thinkability?

Sometimes I think of this enquiry as an alchemical endeavor. Sometimes it feels like an impossible task. As I come to grips with an undertaking that is at once intimately personal; subject to and object of an institution that, by design, is keeper of the status quo; and, eventually, public. A project that is also at once philosophical and practical; social and cultural; aesthetic and reasoned; worldly, earthy, cosmic—I must reckon with the many cross- and undercurrents about/within me—a gamut[43] *of emotional thought—fear and courage, rage and passion for justice, despair and tenacity, depression and resilience, vulnerability and strength, longing and be/longing, grief and love…. Each of these pairs do not represent binaries of opposition, but overlapping fields within the bodyheartmind, moving points on a spiral arm or a Möbius band, embodied wisdom of survival, not one without the other. I desire no less than to be alchemically transmuted in the process of my research; I want to help transmute my world. I am an alchemist—and the enquiry itself—the dissertation—a crucible.*

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[43] *gamut* ~ I. Musical uses. 1. The lowest note on the medieval sequence of hexachords (see sense). In later use usu. more fully gamut G. Now ***hist. 2.a.*** The scale of notes, extending over two octaves and a sixth…containing all the notes generally recognized in medieval music; this set of hexachords, as **a method of learning to sing or perform music**. … Now ***hist. 2.b.*** More generally: the full series of notes recognized by musicians, or by any particular group of people, as forming part of a scale, such as the major diatonic scale; the full range of pitches that may be sounded by anything. 3. **The full range of notes which a voice or instrument can produce, or which are used in a particular piece**.

A few days after I write these words above, I pick up The Wounded Researcher[44] *again. Robert Romanyshyn (2007), elaborating on re-search as a vocation and journey of transformation, says:*

> *What the knower comes to know changes who the knower is. It is an alchemical process in which one knows only insofar as one lets oneself be known, a process that is an Orphic dismemberment of the researcher by the work that has called him/her into its service (p. 117).*

[44] Acting on a hunch—informed by both its title, *The Wounded Researcher*, and cover art by Remedios Varo (*Creation of the Birds*, 1957)—I purchased this book by Robert Romanyshyn the summer of 2009, just before beginning coursework. I tried to read it during that summer, but I had not yet developed the conceptual tools or muscle to understand its import. As I moved through the program, it took on increasing significance.

Introduction to the Project in Two Parts:

Motivation, Method, and Reading the Score

Part II: Forecasting/Mapping Textual Terrain and Language Atmospheres

(Method/ology, Section I)

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum; experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 161)

Notes on Contours and Textures: Form and Style

Ensuing from "Program notes for an *imbroglio,*" Part II of this introduction to our project focuses on a few particular strategic practices that serve to inform/create an experimental methodology, which will be more deeply theorized in Movement Five: *An (E)merging Meta-Methodological Ecology*. This segment is also meant to further explain and justify our intentionally unorthodox approach to this work—its unusual methods and breaches of the prescribed dissertation format for social sciences. Importantly, our intentions follow, in part, in the spirit of Smith's (1991) reading of Gadamer that "it is not possible to establish correct method for inquiry independently of what one is inquiring into. This is because what is being investigated itself holds part of the answer concerning how it should be investigated" (p. 198). In the case of our particular investigation into the meaning of education in a time of mass extinction, how it should be investigated forces us to consider methods of *apocalyptic* proportions.

The word apocalypse, of course, refers to the world-destroying divine battle whereby—in the Western Christian myth and imagination that has for centuries

permeated religion, (and even secular) popular culture and literature—the Four Horsemen representing pestilence/plague, famine/hunger, war and death are surpassed. While nodding to this story *à double entente*, with its symbolic/archetypal potency in our literal time of mass extinction, I am mostly interested in and referring to—in the etymological sense of *apocalypse*[45]*—lifting the veil* from our usual seeing, questioning, interpreting, believing and doing in an attempt *to reveal* what might be hidden beneath and beyond our habitual modes and methods of educating, researching, and leading in a time of mass extinction. As I have already indicated, I have come to believe that researching education in these times requires experimental departures in method and form, including presentation, from the dominant Western educational/research paradigm that has contributed so to the starched veils of delusion that distinguish our era of mass extinction—apocalyptic times indeed.

As will become clearer in descriptions and interpretations of research-encounters that follow in later Movements, the *in/appropriate* is also summoned both by our question and by the work and play taken to "answer" it—thanks in large measure to the research encounter that became central to this project—and Professor Vulture, whom you will later meet. While I can neither be sure of the success of a divergent approach for this enquiry, nor its efficacy for future works, I think of it now as a questing for imaginative possibility and a form of redemptive hope.

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[45] ***apocalypse*** ~ from Latin apocalypsis, < Greek ἀποκάλυψις, **noun of action** < ἀποκαλύπτειν to **uncover, disclose**. (OED) // apocalypse (n.) late 14c., "**revelation, disclosure**," from Church Latin *apocalypsis* "revelation," from Greek *apokalyptein* "**uncover, disclose, reveal**," from apo- "from" (see apo-) + kalyptein "to cover, conceal" (**see Calypso**) > Calypso: **sea nymph in the "Odyssey,"** literally "hidden, hider" (perhaps originally a **death goddess**) from Greek *kalyptein* "**to cover, conceal,"** from PIE *kel- "to cover, conceal, **save,**" **root of English Hell (see cell).**

I want to make a note about my thinking and writing—which are phenomenological and integrative, while also consistently tending toward the emergent, rhizomatic and nomadic. These qualities are integral to my philosophical framework and methodology (which are amplified in sections to follow). While I have worked to remain open to process and relationship in thinking, making and writing—I also have tried to mark well a meandering journey so that you may follow, making sense and meaning as we ramble. Sometimes I am able to anticipate the terrain and tones ahead; sometimes I have to spiral backwards to listen differently and mark where I have been in a process of recursive reflection. (And, sometimes, I get utterly, productively lost.) In this way, in part, I seek to cast maps of and score the process of our (relational, writer-reader) study, as I also think/write/make our way through an improvisational methodology.

I have come to learn through the writing/research process that I am mostly engaged with phenomenological writing. The starting point for this approach to writing is, according to Henriksson and Saevi (2009), the "ethical-aesthetic responsibility of the researcher," which draws upon "Heidegger's understanding of existence as a poetic dwelling and Wivel's postulate that the ethical outlook comes from within, from the poetic outlook" (p. 36). My partial aim then is to understand and apply the "methodological significance of *writing the experience* rather than writing about the experience" (emphasis in original)—engaging this ethical-aesthetic responsibility—while hoping such an attempt at phenomenological research might carry—or at least point towards—something of the "moral force" Max van Manen (1990) also says is possible (p. 12).

The meaning of we….

> …[T]he self, seeing the things around it as subdued by the gravity of the human will, can only be a falsehood tied to the lie inherent in the almost-discreteness of its name, when seen without reference to those kin behind, before, and on all sides of it. (Bromley, 2009, p. 231)

> Loss [in a time of mass extinction] has made a tenuous 'we' of us all. And if we have lost, then it follows that we have had, that we have desired and loved, that we have struggled to find the conditions for our desire. (Butler, 2004, p. 20)

Here I also want to note the emergence of a qualitative shift from the standard perspective to the acknowledgement of a collaborative "we"—a relational presence I feel as I write. You might have noted that I often refer to *our* question or enquiry, or that *we* shall… This reflects my intuition and desire to cultivate a general attitude of collaboration—to write in, as and towards relationship. (Is there really any other possible way?) I write to and with you, known and unknown. I aim to write with/in, to and for a diverse multispecies community, and the world/cosmos—while also hoping to tap something of our collective un/conscious. I want to remain conscious of this collective presence, for I believe it is in educating, researching and writing for and from (within) the prevalent ideology of individualism (one of our culture's principal delusions) that gives rise to conditions described by Adrienne Rich (2001), wherein: *We found ourselves*

> *reduced to I*
> *and the whole thing became*
> *silly, ironic, terrible:*
> *we were trying to live a personal life*
> *and yes, that was the only life*
> *we could bear witness to*

But the great dark birds of history screamed and plunged
into our personal weather… (Rich, 2001, p. 319)

And so, I appeal to the great range of knowing and feeling that resides with and between us, relationally and hopefully generously shared—needed as a most potent form of energy for the massive effort to redirect our course. I understand and intend this attitude to be reflective of a process-relational approach to the work, and as a gesture towards communal acts of loving and mourning in a time of mass extinction. Perhaps, also, like Judith Butler (2003):

> I might try to tell a story here about what I am feeling, but it would have to be a story in which the very "I" who seeks to tell the story is stopped in the midst of the telling; the very "I" is called into question by its relation to the Other, a relation that does not precisely reduce me to speechlessness, but does nevertheless clutter my speech with signs of its undoing. I tell a story about the relations I choose, only to expose somewhere along the way, the way I am gripped and undone by these very relations. My narrative falters, as it must. Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something. This seems so clearly the case with grief, but it can be so only because it was already the case with desire. One does not always stay intact. (p. 23)

Furthermore, I am quite conscious that this is not, in fact, "my work." It is our work. In an ideal research world, according to the philosophies I attempt here to embody, I would not be required to either conduct this work in supposed isolation—as in the illusion of the solo scholar claiming originality—nor to assert the final work as

proprietary—my intellectual *property*.[46] It is in fact a conversation, a co-production—a consequential collaboration and shared labor. You, reader/s—through our critical, discursive, aesthetic, imaginal and emotional entanglement—are hopefully touched and moved and moved to act. With new thought, image and feeling threaded into y/our becoming, let us hope we will be able to pick up the work as multiple lines of flight, continuing its creative mission, infecting others with a contagion of love. Let's face it, (riffing off Kepnes, 1992): Because we are "constituted in and through each 'other'" in the eco-social context, we are in "radical need" of each other…. We "must respect and be responsible for [each other] if [we are] to be at all" (p. 114).

The under-score, with suggested routes: Footnoting new coordinates, flows, and future lines of flight.

I have discovered, by way of footnotes, a mapping strategy that I hope will be helpful, rather than merely distractive. While it may seem contradictory, most of my footnotes also serve as interruptive/disruptive interludes, both for writer and reader. While the American Psychological Association (2010) guidelines for use of footnotes are constrained to copyright permissions and "essential" information and singular ideas (p. 37-38), I intentionally breach this code, as I tend to use discursive footnotes to denote new lines of flight that lead in directions that take me away from incomplete flows of thought, or to otherwise mark important asides or divergences to which I may return and follow. By way of this plotting process, I also hope to point toward and/or leave open possible new directions—or, in Deleuze-Guattarian terms, *lines of flight*—for readers to

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[46] This is *in/appropriate*! *Proprietas*; Latin *appropriatus*, past participle of *approprio* ("to make one's own"), from *ad* ("to") + *proprio* ("to make one's own"), from *proprius* ("one's own, private").

follow, intellectually, affectively and actively. Borrowing from Lorraine's reading of this concept (in Parr, 2010), lines of flight are "thought-movements" (and, as I intend here to set in motion, thought-sensing-feeling-movements) that "creatively evolve in connection with the lines of flight of other thought-movements" (p. 148). In other words, a line of flight is an imaginative, reflective, and/or æffective leap from an encounter with an idea, particular situation, set of information, argument, dream, work of art, etc. which creates a new ideas, feelings, images, etc.

Etymological detours and overtones in the relief[47] of words.

> The words of a living language are like creatures: they are alive. Each word is a physical character, a look and a personality, an ancestry, an expectation of life and death, a hope of posterity. … We can keep our words alive, or at our caprice we can kill them—though some escape and prosper in our despite. (Bishop, 1971, p. xxiii)

> [T]he revolt against brutality begins with a revolt against the language that hides that brutality. (Solnit, 2014, April 7)

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[47] I use the word ***relief*** in the sense of many of its multiple aspects, beginning as an adjective describing the three-dimensional representation of terrain—"projection of figure or design from a flat surface," c.1600, from French *relief*, from Italian *rilievo*, from *rilevare* "to raise," from Latin *relevare* "to raise, lighten"—but also as: its earliest sense **"remains of food left after a meal**" (*c*1050), remainder, residue (late 12th cent. in Anglo-Norman)"; degree of variation in elevation of a part of the **surface of the earth**; vividness, distinctness, or prominence due to contrast or method of presentation; **change which provides respite from something monotonous or tedious; sustenance; assistance in time of danger**, need, or difficulty; assistance towards saving or achieving something; a **call sounded on a horn**; deliverance or **release from religious or political oppression or tyranny**; alleviation of or **deliverance from distress, anxiety, or some other emotional burden**; remains of a thing; remainder, residue. Related to post-classical Latin ***relevamentum*** (see relievement n.), ***relevatio*** (see **relevation** n.). (O.E.D).

My experience of writing this research has had the æffect of further sensitizing me to language. I have, in a sense, as van Manan (2011) would put it, developed "a special relation to language which disturbs its taken-for-grantedness" (para. 3). As so, you will find, among other musings in my footnotes, one outcome of this sensitization in the form/process of etymological interpositions. These ruminations may also signal new lines of flight, and usually include notes on words themselves. (You will find references for these etymological investigations and experimentations in Appendix A: References for Etymologies and Definitions, and so apart from general references.) I will sometimes embolden words that serve as touch points or nodes along the rhizo-etymological trail—that send us along new lines of flight. (If bold text is in the original, I will indicate so.) These bold points or nodes indicate aesthetic and/or critical moments of encounter between words and my thinking/feeling.

In reference to Deleuze, Levan (2007) explains how, in an encounter (such as, in this instance, with words and stories of words),

> contact does not imply a merging or incorporation, but something new emerging *between* two people, things, texts, or ideas. Importantly, contact is always *haptic.* It always involves a touch. Translators know this, of course, but often forget it when the task is overwhelmed by an anxious concern with meaning and representation. It is easy to lose the touch and feel of words by looking beyond them to their representations. The point of contact, of touching, is the first aesthetic moment of an encounter. **(**p. 61)

To further explain, I have found this method of etymological intervention important to my writing process. When I work with language, I often intuitively turn to

the roots of words. I imagine this process akin to "writing advice" of Deleuze (1995), when he suggests that style is not developed "just by putting words together, combining phrases, using ideas. You have," he says, "to open up words, break things open, to free earth's vectors" (in Levan, 2007, p. 55). With an eerie regularity, this process of *opening up words*—with "'words as eggs' with life-giving potential" (Lockhart, 1983, in Nelson, 2013, p. 330)—leads via synchronistic and surprising twists to fresh and occasionally poetic insight. So, in this way, I sometimes let *the stories of words* themselves guide what wants to be said next. Words lead, and I follow along with my own associations and amplifications to draw out meaning. My former teacher, M.C. Richards (1996) said of such a habit: "When we ask what we are talking about, we begin to unlock the experiences that are contained, packaged in those words. ... If you want to know what something is, you stop to meditate on the word" (p. 52). Tracing the histories and roots of words also serves as a method of disrupting modernist habits of mind, as Palmer (2001), emphasizes: "One seeks the 'hidden weight' of ancient words precisely in order to go *behind* what is self-evident in modern thinking. This special and intense listening ... is necessary in order to break away from the confines of the modern world view" (para. 8). This breaking away from the modern worldview is especially important to my project—for reasons I have outlined in the introduction to our problem/opportunity in the First Movement—and is corroborated by Smith (1991), who reminds us that "so many of our modern pains issue from a cultural determination to refute or refuse the interconnection of everything" (p. 200). Therefore, this underlying and sometimes hidden or forgotten meaning is something I aim to retrieve as I methodologically (hermeneutically, poetically) consider what needs to be said about education in a time of mass extinction.

Synchronistically, after articulating my intuitive sense and intention, by way of further research, the importance of this special and intense listening was further confirmed by Smith. He tells us that the "first requirement" for the hermeneutic imagination

> …is to develop a deep attentiveness to language itself, to notice how one uses it and how others use it. It is important to gain a sense of the etymological traces carried by words to see what they point to historically. Every hermeneutical scholar should have a good etymological dictionary at their side. (p. 199)

In addition to the importance of seeking the 'hidden weight' of ancient words, I should also suggest that there are times when existing words, even at their roots, are perhaps all together inadequate for the times within which we are living and becoming. One strategy for dealing with this inadequacy is to invent new terminology such as was done, for instance, by Whitehead and Deleuze-Guattari, who invented "neologisms for all new ideas and even more important [sic], for all minutely modified ideas. … There is a certain justification for neologisms when one's project is so new that is has no serious neighbors" (Neville, 1989, p. 243-244). The great challenge of this strategy then becomes communicating these new words and their meanings in a way that others (not only scholars) are able to æffectively and critically understand, apply and extend in speech and deed, which I will humbly aim to do if/when employing new terms.

It occurs (imaginally) to me as I now write that perhaps there is some in/distinct connection between inattentiveness to words and language (in modernist garb) and the extinction of species. The meanings of words become hollowed out, exhausted—threatened or endangered, if you will—by use in language atmospheres of commodification in marketing and commerce, of technology, utility, control, assessment,

and standardization. This morning (a few months since I first wrote this paragraph), this thought is confirmed as I read of the "list of the entries … no longer felt to be relevant to a modern-day childhood," subtracted from a new edition of the *Oxford Junior Dictionary*, as reported by Robert Macfarlane (2015).

> The deletions included acorn, adder, ash, beech, bluebell, buttercup, catkin, conker, cowslip, cygnet, dandelion, fern, hazel, heather, heron, ivy, kingfisher, lark, mistletoe, nectar, newt, otter, pasture and willow. The words taking their places in the new edition included attachment, block-graph, blog, broadband, bullet-point, celebrity, chatroom, committee, cut-and-paste, MP3 player and voice-mail. (para. 17)

My thoughts go to the death of poetry and the imagination, as we de-soul language and, simultaneously, the world—and I lament for the children who may never know—or even know the names of—bluebells, willows or kingfishers—or the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins (1918/2011):

> *As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies dráw fláme;*
>
> *As tumbled over rim in roundy wells*
>
> *Stones ring*… (p. 46)

In exiling words like hazel, heather, and heron—we also banish the creatures they describe—draining our language of soul-meaning, which serves to connect us to the phenomenal-imaginal world of enchanted feeling and beauty—language as *"a manifestation, a revelation of intimate being and of the psychic link which unites us to the world"* (Goldstein, in Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. 228, italics original). And, so, we negligently and/or willfully do the very opposite of *recollecting*, which Plato says is, "a

process of recovering that which has been forgotten through time and inattention (p. 506)" (in Henriksson & Saevi, 2009, p. 45). Alternatively, imagine with me: What if the act of conjuring the "soul" of words back into our lexicon could do something, even remotely, to stave off the extinction of creatures. This is one of other reasons to be attuned to and engage language and poetry as key components of our enquiry, as we attempt to reveal, fathom, express, avert, correct and mend forces leading our world ever closer to the brink.[48]

The typographical oblique as aesthetic, ambiguity generator: What's in a word, such as *in/appropriate.*

Let me dwell momentarily on an example of a word that includes an oblique or virgule (in computer jargon, forward slash—from here, oblique), as you have already encountered this device (in our title, in fact!), and so may wonder about its meaning. The particular word we'll consider—a word which will take on more significance as we proceed—is *inappropriate—or rather in/appropriate*—as I am aiming to suggest. With the inclusion of the oblique, *in/appropriate* takes on a meaning that is more than merely inappropriate—as in straightforwardly im*proper,* un*becoming*, in*decorous*, mal*apropos*, rude or shocking. Through hermeneutic association, *in/appropriate* is also *propitiously* entangled with *appropriation*—of space, time, identity, knowledge, behaviors, the bodymind, psyche, soul—as well as *proper, propped-up, property, proprietary,* and *proprioception* (a word meaning "capable of responding to stimuli from within the body," to which we will return later in connection to feedback loops).

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[48] I am remembering as I conclude this paragraph, my son, who, as a child, loved the names of things, and who, when he was about three or four years old, declared out of the blue, "I love my words!" He was also an inventor of words—like *zumperzine* and *gordalator*.

By inserting the oblique to make *in/appropriate*, I intend to convey layered meaning, with appropriate-inappropriate placed in the creative tension of ambiguity. This verbal/conceptual device works by eliciting a number of possible entries into meaning. In its most familiar and simple form, it is used to denote a *both/and* category; as placed between two words it can suggest that whichever word on either side of the mark most pertinent may be chosen to complete the meaning of the text in which they are placed. It is also used to divide paired words in binary oppositions (e.g., he/she, up/down, etc.).

A/r/tographers[49] uniquely employ this meaning-making device to even greater æffect as a way to create or point to expansive, poetic meaning, including ambiguity and paradox. Springgay et al. (2005) instructs:

> The slash is particular in its use, as it is intended to divide and double a word—to make the word mean at least two things, but often more. It also refers to what might appear between two points of orientation, hinting at meaning that is not quite there or yet unsaid. This play between meanings does not suggest a limitless positionality, where interpretation is open to any whim or chance. It is the tension provoked by this doubling, between limit/ less that maintains meaning's possibility. The slash is not intended to be one or the other term; it can be both

[49] A/r/tographer: A name for researcher who practices a/r/tography, a form of arts-based enquiry, which engages Art and writing in sustained dialogue, as a way toward understanding that which is being re-searched. An a/r/tographer artistically and dialogically embodies Artist/Researcher/Teacher, and "grapher" (writer). Commentary by Springgay et al. (2008) situates a/r/tography as "practice-based research … informed by feminist, post-structuralist, hermeneutic and other postmodern theories…(p. xi) —and which draws on philosophy including "phenomenology, [and on] educational action research, feminist theories, and contemporary art criticism to theorize […its methodology…] with an attention to the in-between where meanings reside in the simultaneous use of language, images, materials, situations, space and time" (p. xix).

> simultaneously, or neither. The slash suggests movement or shifts between the terms. For example, the term un/familiar is a movement between the familiar and the strange. The slash makes the terms active, relational, as they reverberate with, in, and through each other. (p. 904)

A/r/tographer, Carl Leggo (2012), in "twenty-nine ways of looking at an oblique," playfully and poetically describes the a/r/tographer's use of the oblique as, for instance: "generative, creative, productive, and critical, in love with language, a vital and vibrant inquiry that pulses with life"; "open[ing] up possibilities for interrogating language poetically"; like "musical notation" that "sings in ecotones, tunes and turns our hearing to tensionality and intentionality"; helping us laugh "with the interrogative spirit of Hermes"; "hint[ing] at what is not said"; "connect[ing], relate[ing], join[ing]"; dwell[ing] "in liminal spaces"; "always leaning into the wind, eager to become, hopeful for what is not yet known"; and, among other habits, "dwell[ing] in spaces between *and* and *or* and *but* with Aokian[50] wonder, aching for conjunctive openings…" (p. 1-5).

In the case of *in/appropriate*, the use of the oblique with intent of provoking ambiguity helps us think about when something or someone is deemed appropriate or not appropriate; and with whose or what gauge shall we use to determine this consideration. Something may seem perfectly appropriate within the context of a particular set of attitudes (including epistemological) and behaviors, but be totally inappropriate when a broader/deeper context is considered, such as when these said *normal* attitudes and

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[50] Aokian refers to Dr. Ted Tetsuo Aoki, within whose "poetic musings lies a serious re/examiniation of the 'space between', where we might be enlightened to learn more about the notion of negotiating in between the curriculum-as-planned and lived curriculum, or understand how the feelings of existing in between cultural realms might inform our own (sensitive) practice as educators…" (Olson, 2012, para. 5).

behaviors lead to mass extinction and climate catastrophe. In this case, what and whose rules and procedures do we un/consciously and *properly* follow—especially when habits of democracy have atrophied beyond wise or æffective use (or which have never been fully exercised); lack significant and/or informed participation; are woefully too slow for adequately confronting dire circumstances; and/or, most disturbingly, have been systematically thwarted and stealthily dismantled by the illegitimately powerful—by well-oiled (and oil-welled) machinations of the plutocratic[51] corporate state/non-state?

[51] e.g., see Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012.

Syncopation: Offbeat alchemical, aesthetic inter-/intra-actions[52] via autoecographic interludes, featuring dreams and synchronicities, poetry, and extinction and methodology reports.

> A syncopated rhythm … places stress on a weak beat, or that creates a strong impulse on a subdivision of a beat, an in-between beat. Weak beats and in-between beats are also known collectively as "offbeats," and syncopated rhythm may be thought of as "offbeat rhythm." (Hoffman, 1997, para. 2)

Continuing through the text, you will encounter syncopated inter-/ intra-actions—as you already have—"offbeat" interludes that create "a disturbance or interruption of the regular flow of rhythm" (Hoffman, 1997, para. 1), which function in our midst, in part, like "gaps of interpretation" where something like "truth happens" (Henriksson & Saevi, 2009, p. 56). Precipitated by this irregular rhythm, these inter-/intra-actions are intended to disrupt your readerly flow and awareness—creating in-between spaces in the text for

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[52] Months after I envisioned this term *intra-actions* as a descriptor for these interludes, I took a notion to see if it might be in use elsewhere, and so did an Internet search (on 11 March 2015). I found a very interesting connection (with Whiteheadian undertones), which I note as a line for future, further flight. I find the connection beautifully synchronistic, both in how my encounter with Barad's term (see below) exemplifies process-relational research, as well as how it supports my intuitive choice for the word, and the concept I am trying to explain. **Material feminist philosopher, Karen Barad** (2007):

> The notion of intra-action is a key element of my agential realist framework. The neologism **'intra-action'** ***signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies.*** That is, in contrast to the usual 'interaction', which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction, **the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action.** It is important to note that the 'distinct' agencies are only distinct in a relational, not an absolute, sense, that is, ***agencies are only distinct in a relation to their mutual entanglement; they don't exist as individual elements. …the notion of intra-action constitutes a radical reworking of the traditional notion of causality.*** (p. 33, italics original)

more vulnerable encounters— propositions meant as lures for feeling (Whitehead)—invitations for intro-/intra-spection, perhaps toward some subtle (or not-so-subtle) shift (becoming) in feeling, knowing, imagining, and/or questioning—that also have the æffect of creating a "dynamic between text and reader" (Romanyshyn, 2012, p. 96). These interludes are perhaps where I most prominently allow for the "poetics of the research process" wherein, as Romanyshyn (2007) suggests, we "attend to mourning that is left in the gap … between what is said and what remains unsaid" (p. 280). Material for interludes—sourced principally from my research journal—include phenomenological descriptions, reflections, dreams, synchronicities, poems, and deep sighs. Communicating these expressive inter-/intra-modal events, including data from the un/conscious, is intended to create vulnerable, hopefully aesthetic re-search moments, which æffectively ensoul the overall work. I believe it is in becoming-aesthetically-vulnerable that we are mutually primed or made available for shifts in consciousness and transpositional learning—in alchemical un/doing. Vulnerable sharing and receiving in/as research are also practices and acts of Love.

Auto*eco*graphy.

Let's consider the *autoecographic* aspect of these interludes. While autoethnography—a research method at once process and product—"seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)" (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, para. 1)—I am imagining *autoecography* as part of a living enquiry meant to describe and express personal experience situated within the *ecological/cosmological* dimension—to include the ethno-cultural dimension of this experience. Like autoethnography then, as explained by

Hansson and Dybbroe (2012), *autoecography* explores "the relation between self, other, and context, and involves subjectivities, bodies [human and more-than-human], and settings in the research," while it researches "the boundaries between researcher, researched, and context" including "the relation (and boundaries) between body and text" (p. 4). By specifically including the *ecological/cosmological* as context*, autoecography* is a widening and deepening of the circle of experience (hermeneutic circle) subject to enquiry—and therefore data to be recursively expressed and interpreted—which, especially in light of our question, adds a (literally) vital[53] dimension to "correct method" for re-searching education in a time of mass extinction. I think of this weave or rhythm of autoecographic reflections positioned in the text—among other purposes already alluded to—as philosophical/phenomenological investigations into who "I am" (as re-searcher), within a universe understood as a "communion of subjects" (Berry, 1999). It is by way of autoecography that I enquire into and relate some of my personal story—my educational story, and experiences of love, death and grief in this time of extinction. These interludes also include some reflection on the enquiry process itself, as I experience different moods and tenses. In narrating and integrating my own experience, dreams, art, memory and voice with others encountered, like Kepnes (1992), I "respect the relational and process nature of the self … with others in the 'common world'" (p. 115).

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[53] *vital* (adj.) ~ late 14c., "of or **manifesting life**," from Latin *vitalis* "of or belonging to life," from *vita* "life," related to *vivere* "to live," from PIE root ***gweie-** (1) "to live" (see bio-). The sense of "necessary or important" is from 1610s, via the notion of "essential to life" (late 15c.).

Dreams and the unconscious.

At the commencement of coursework for the doctoral program, I began chronicling dreams and synchronicities (often synchronistic dreams) which appeared to speak to and/or guided my process, or inform interpretations. Because I know the un/conscious—as revealed through creative processes—to be a rich source of information that can add depth and dimension to an enquirer's craft, revelations and outcomes, I have included in these autoecographic interludes, as noted, dreams and other material not usually encountered in scholarly work. Consideration of the unconscious, such as through dreams, is consciously invited into the work of an *alchemical hermeneutic* approach to research, which I enfold into our methodology (later considered in more depth—a hermeneutics of becoming). I understand dreams to have a multiplicity of meanings—and to have not only personal, but collective relevance. Acknowledged presence of the un/conscious in research, with consideration of the imaginal/archetypal aspects of the researcher's and World psyche (Anima mundi or World soul)—such as through dreams, synchronicity, and Art—Nelson (2013) suggests that it is by way of this intentionally psyche-inclusive (she actually says "psyche-centered") enquiry that the researcher's voice and archetypal image work in tandem, each engendering the other. "What emerges as the finished work," she says, "is a collaboration of psyche and scholar that molds the text in deep and sometimes unnamable ways" (p. 333). Among other scholars, Semetsky and Delpech-Ramey (2012) endorse this approach to accessing the unconscious for educational and research purposes, and as well emphasize its import for collective concerns: "It is the unconscious as multiplicity that ultimately connects us not with private but public—social, political, and world-historical—existence. Over and above the

personal unconscious, it [the unconscious] always deals with some collective frame" (p. 70).

Non-linear time, process and narrative.

Non-linear time (*Aion* or *Kairos* time) is process-relational time, becoming-time, transpositional or saltatory[54] time. And so these syncopated interludes are also meant to disrupt our usual linear time-tellings—to challenge "normal" (Western) conceptions of time and narrative (a problem that we will later visit in more detail as it matters to education and research in a time of mass extinction). This is, in part, a response to the connections of linear time to notions of rational progress, which, according to Michelle Bastian (2009), help "exclude nature, and those humans associated with nature" (p. 114). And so, I hope these syncopated interludes at least symbolically convey or create a sense of non-linear time "marked by a certain disjointedness" (p. 114)—to reflect the "fleeting copresence of multiple time zones" (Braidotti, 2011, p. 228)—the dynamic time of becoming.

This non-linear way of proceeding—relating and becoming—of course, has its challenges, including problems that necessarily boil down to design and structure of text—the unfolding of complex thought and narrative that—regardless of multiple strands

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54 *saltation* ~ (sælˈteɪʃən) *n.* from Latin *saltātiō* a dance, from *saltāre* to leap about 1) The act of leaping, jumping, or **dancing**; 2) **Discontinuous movement**, transition, or development; **advancement by leaps**; 3) *Biology*/*genetics* A **single mutation that drastically alters the phenotype**, an **abrupt variation** in the appearance of an organism, species, etc., usually caused by genetic mutation; 3) *geology* the **leaping movement of sand or soil particles carried in water or by the wind**.

Of, pertaining to, characterized by, or **adapted for dancing**; pertaining to, characterized by, or adapted for leaping; proceeding by abrupt movement. ***Biol.*** Of the movement of small particles within cells: proceeding in directed jerks; ***Biol.*** *saltatory replication*, a hypothetical evolutionary event in which very many identical copies of a short section of DNA are added to a genome.

of thought—consists of putting one word and one sentence in front of another. I draw inspiration from Gregory Bateson's concept of *metalogue,* as put forth in his classic *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (1972), which he defines as:

> …a conversation about some problematic subject. This conversation should be such that not only do the participants discuss the problem but the structure of the conversation as whole is also relevant to the same subject [creating a double format]. … Notably, the history of evolutionary theory is inevitably a metalogue between man [sic] and nature, in which the creation and interaction of ideas must necessarily exemplify evolutionary process. (p. 2)

And so, it is in this light, that writing itself—as integral to the process of enquiring—and the form it takes as product—is like "the structure of the conversation as whole [that] is also relevant" to the intricacies of our subject-matters of love, grief and mass extinction. This mirrors Gadamer's proposition, earlier referenced (see p. 77), for the need to establish correct method for enquiry in relationship to what one is inquiring into. One could say that what is being investigated itself holds part of the answer concerning how it should be written about. For me, turning to poetry and poetic enquiry at times has held part of this answer. This idea of emergent affiliation between question, method and narrative, continues to pattern our work, as we'll see later when considering the dialogic encounter that informs our research.

Extinction reports.

extinction (n.) early 15c., "**annihilation**," from Latin *extinctionem/exstinctionem* (nominative *extinctio/exstinctio*) "extinction, annihilation," noun of action from past participle stem of *extinguere/exstinguere* "**quench**, wipe out" (see extinguish). **Originally of fires, lights**; figurative use, the wiping out of a material thing (a debt, a person, a family, etc.) from early 17c.; **of species by 1784**.

As well as my turning to several authors, artists and organizations for different perspectives on extinctions, I receive a daily Google alert, by which I electronically receive a digest of news reports and blog entries based on the keyword, extinction.[55] I also receive frequent notices from the Center for Biological Diversity. In part, I will turn to these sources and others to create Extinction Reports, which might be thought of as textual cairns—inter- and intra-positioned—dis/orienting excursions into a presence of loss. Marking trailheads into possibly unexplored territory—these poetic markers/makers may be considered provocations and evocations to wander and wonder into feeling-realms of extinction, as well as, perhaps, weathering-chaos. My intention is to call on

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[55] *It bears mentioning*... For the past several months, within these alerts with details of the unfolding crisis of mass extinction, I have had to wade through various commercial promotions for an upcoming film—from which there will be a video game spin-off—*Transformers: The Age of Extinctions* (2014). Based on a toy line of dolls (aka "action figures")—the "Age of Extinctions" narrative, according to Ace Show Biz, has humanity picking up the pieces, as "Autobots and Decepticons have all but vanished from the face of the planet. However, a group of powerful, ingenious businessman and scientists attempt to learn from past Transformer incursions and push the boundaries of technology beyond what they can control - all while an ancient, powerful Transformer menace sets Earth in his crosshairs. The epic adventure and battle between good and evil, freedom and enslavement ensues." For instance, today I am directed to learn about "Toy Palace Showcasing a Few New Age of *Extinction* Based Toys."

your private and shared senses of love and grief, vulnerability and care, loneliness and solidarity, desire and heart-break, becoming and be/longing—and, by the way, to consider the educational and leadership values of being present to—and getting lost momentarily in—the very real—yet largely cognitively un/imaginable—consequences of improvident and/or miseducated human beliefs and behaviors that contribute to the fragile times in which we dwell, as well as to the futures of the not-yet-conceived or formed. You might consider these reports markers-pointing-towards a deterritorialized[56] space-time—the "Eremozoic Era"—or the "Age of Loneliness"—what E. O. Wilson (2006) calls our emerging era. I imagine the Eremozoic Era as the logical tragic result of the cosmological unraveling/unmooring of the human.

[56] Deterritorialization and reterritorialization are terms that have been adopted and adapted from Deleuze and Guattari by the social sciences and humanities, i.e. geography, anthropology, international relations, linguistics, etc. Deterritorialization has come to refer to the unmooring of culture from place, or the loosening of ties of economics, politics, and social relations to fixed spatial configurations (Popescu, 2010, p. 723).

An Enquiry and Questing for Meaning, by Way of Method

I have already indicated that this enquiry is short on research into, critique of, or recommendations for specific applied practices. In other words, it is not my intention to survey or evaluate curricula or programs, or to seek, for now, specific ways of implementing change in our educational practices and institutions (though I am not without ideas for this bigger project). Explicitly, the work is by both necessity and choice primarily concerned with conceptual, æffective, aesthetic, and methodological questing and questions. While our complex[57] problems/opportunities of enquiry—or the "multiple cascading ecological crises" of the world (Jensen, 2013) touched upon in our First Movement—proceeds, in part, from a critique of modernism as manifest in education and leadership that is well established in the literature, we'll not loiter long in this territory. Instead, we will wander into and take up my main (known) objectives in carrying out this dissertation: to work/play/enquire within overlapping process-relational philosophic, aesthetic, phenomenological and hermeneutic spaces, while exploring central notions, imaginings, feelings, and repressions and/or expressions of gratitude, desire, allurement, fear, despair, grief, and Art—that orbit around and are embedded in Love and Death in a time of extinction.

Methodological Riskiness: Searching Other than by Way of Rigor

In closing this provocative (hopefully evocative) movement, I am fully aware that I open this research to numerous criticisms from within the academy by moving into philosophical, and, especially, *soft and fluid* auto-, alchemical, and arts-informed methods. Yet, I agree with Patrick Slattery (2001), who defends vulnerable

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[57] While in a certain light, quite clear and simple.

autoethnographic (and I, autoecographic) research when he says, "The psychological inertia and status quo sociopolitical [and ecological] injustices that result from too much safe research are a far greater risk in my mind" (p. 384) than the risks involved in working from within. I'd like to replace the word *rigor*[58], as applied to research, with words like *attentiveness, adventurousness, care, integrity, lucidity,* and *coherence*.

We will continue to consider the importance of language, form, process and æffectivity for this research project in sections below, as we continue to put flesh on our conceptual and methodological bones. But first, let's listen to and improvise along with the *symphosophy*—the multiple philosophical ideas—that, as considered in our Third Movement, help breathe life into this work.

[58] *rigor* ~ (n.) late 14c., from Old French rigor "strength, hardness" (13c., Modern French *rigueur*), from Latin *rigorem* (nominative rigor) "**numbness, stiffness, hardness**, firmness; **roughness, rudeness**," from *rigere* "be **stiff**" (see rigid). See also ***rigor mortis*** ~ "stiffening of the body caused by contraction of muscles after **death**," 1837, from Latin rigor "stiffness" (see rigor) + *mortis*, genitive of *mors* "death" (see mortal).

Third Movement

Symphosophy[59]: Conceptual Cartography and Philosophical Counterpoint

Process is the becoming of experience. (Whitehead, 1929/1978 p. 166)

Education is at the center of our becoming. (Nicolescu, 2002, p. 131)

Philosophy is something one does [not represent, but] does…. (Gadamer, 2001, p. 63)

Proliferating Paradigms

In the following movement we will rove through a necessarily circumscribed summary of an expansive philosophical terrain—that includes sketches of transdisciplinarity, process-relational philosophy, and ecophilosophies—a rambunctious multi-voiced fugue (composed of sometimes harmonious, sometimes dissonant vocal parts)—that intones the significant confluences and tensions that inform my nomadic conceptual positions. While a more thorough scrutiny of the various conceptual currents in this work would take us far beyond the scope of this project, I believe we have a richly textured cartographic score, in/through which we may both "ground" our thinking and nomadically wander.

Before we proceed to particulars, however, let me dwell for a moment on a curious mixing of metaphors, in particular the nomad and the fugue. Both—together—might be helpful in conveying and understanding the relationships between/among multiple

[59] The portmanteau *symphosophy* combines the prefix *sym-* from Ancient Greek *συμ-* (sum), variant of *συν-* (sun-), from *σύν* (sún, "with, in company with, together with") (+ the ph/o from phil- and phony) + from *sophia* "knowledge, wisdom," from *sophis* "wise, learned;" of unknown origin.

philosophical currents.[60] Lets start with the tension metaphorically evoked by way of the etymology of *fugue* (defined as one type of musical genre, or multi-vocal contrapuntal technique). The English term *fugue* (from the 16th century) is derived from the French *fugue* or Italian *fuga. Fuga* comes from Latin, also *fuga*, which is related to both *fugere* (to flee) and *fugare* (to chase) (think, too, of fugitive). And so, in/appropriately, and process-relationally, I imagine the contending, complimentary and co-creative philosophies—emerging, merging and diverging over time—arriving in our time simultaneously fleeing from and chasing after one another. I/We are philosophically situated—for now at least—in the tensions created by this concurrent fleeing and chasing. And while I am always thankful for epistemological rest in the long silences between beats, I know this is the creative, in/appropriate *imbroglio*, at work.

Additionally (retrospectively), regarding my attempt here to articulate my conceptual position, I'll confess to being bothered by the fact that certain voices are still too faint—for instance, the voice of phenomenology—which is important as a theoretical incubator for both certain hermeneutic offspring and expressive arts—both of which we will methodologically engage. I have also discovered conceptual confusion and frustration with the residual æffects of the corporeal-language dualism, sharpened by the "linguistic turn" of postmodern deconstruction, which sidelined phenomenology. Then followed a reactive scholarship that discouraged methodological approaches such as hermeneutics (and hermeneutic phenomenology). Why the competition between language and sense/experience? Why not both/and? While not intending religious significance, the Biblical phrase comes to my mind: The Word *became* flesh (John 1:14). We will see that new materialism (as does other

philosophies included here) grapples with this and other binaries, contributing to an overall paradigm that aims to reconcile dualistic categories such as nature/culture, language/reality, mind/body, and human/more-than-human.

Ranging across a wide moor—I have found philosophical promiscuity affirmed in at least two overlapping spaces. First—as articulated by Rosi Braidotti (2011)—in nomadic theory, I find a home wandering between borders and navigating crosscurrents—where my subjectivity and embodied thinking are (allowed to be) in permanent flux—in a forever process of becoming—(which, when you think about it, is actually the sum of philosophy—and philosophy to come). Nomadic theory, or "nomadology," infuses "movement and mobility at the heart of thinking" (p. 1) as a way "to think differently about ourselves and the ongoing processes of deep transformation" (p. 8). Braidotti calls for shaking up long-established habits of thought in how we do theory, more conceptual creativity and ethical courage, and "deeper theoretical efforts to sustain the qualitative shift of perspective that may help us confront the complexities of our era" (p. 9). Perhaps not just as an aside, nomadic theory involves sustained critiques of "self-interest, the progressive tolerance, and the deeply seated conservatism of the institutions that are officially in charge of knowledge production, especially the university" (p. 6).

Braidotti (2011) introduces nomadic theory by illustrating at least three ways in which "thinking today is structurally nomadic" (p. 1): conceptually, politically, and contextually. A bare-bones summary of these three modes follows. Firstly:

> Conceptually, nomadic thought stresses the idea of embodiment and the embodied and embedded material structure of what we commonly call thinking. It is the materialism of the flesh that unifies mind and body in a new approach that blurs all

> boundaries. … The space of nomadic thinking is framed by perceptions, concepts, and imaginings that cannot be reduced to human, rational consciousness." (p. 2)

It also conceptualizes (borrowing from Spinoza via Deleuze) the notion of desire (without lack) as an "ontological force of becoming" (p. 2). It embraces a "monistic vision of matter in opposition to dichotomous and dualist ways of thought" (p. 3).

Politically, nomadic thought "expresses a nonunitary vision of the self" and summons us "to rethink the structures and boundaries of the self" (p. 3). Braidotti warns against confusing individual identity with subjectivity, saying, "identity is a bounded, ego-indexed habit of fixing and capitalizing on one's selfhood, subjectivity is a socially mediated process of relations and negotiations with multiple others" (p. 4). Following, she says that social structures emerge as a collective project (p. 4), and so, while also a process of negotiated relations, are never fixed. This is especially important when we think of power and its æffects[61], which she discusses as process-relational, in nomadic terms (attributed to

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[61] I sometimes stumble when writing the words *affect* and *effect*—not out of grammatical uncertainty, but because there so often seems a doubling-over or enfolding of verb and noun into one another, the possible lack of distinction between an emotional state and cognition, or a possibility that cause-effect is actually also cause-affect or affect-cause (prehending). I usually try to keep these words in their "proper" grammatical places, while I have also employed the oblique, such as in effect/affect or a/effect. For similar reasons, though more deeply theorized, Jondi Keane (2013) puts the ligature Æ to work in Æffect:

> To indicate a newly configured relation of thought to matter…which correlates the concurrent measures of affect and effect so prized in research and persistent in experience (of non-linear and causal events). ... Æffect allows the emphasis...upon embodied, situated and distributed cognition's role in the organism-environment relations...to enter the descriptive language of a new materialism. (p. 41)

Additionally, according to Keane:

> Effect, requires identities to remain solid and static, autonomous and persistent, in order to measure interactions that maintain identity distinctions and maintains subject-object relationships. … Affect emphasizes the impersonal character of our common condition. Affects…are 'becomings that spill over beyond whoever lives

Foucault), as a "situation or process not an object or essence. Subjectivity is the effect of these constant flows of in-between power connections" (p. 4).

Contextually, Braidotti asks us to consider the intellectual culture in which nomadic thought emerged—connecting it with "philosophies of difference" (as emerged in France from the 1980's). Though she links nomadism with poststructuralism, she is purposeful in distinguishing different strands of this philosophic "school," which she says is often (especially in the U. S.) associated with the linguistic turn. Rather, Braidotti traces poststructuralism's genomic influence in nomadic theory to the "enchanted materialism" of the eighteenth [sic? seventeenth?[62]] century (p. 5)—to which we will come full circle when later considering material feminism—alternatively known as new or neo-materialism, or vital materialism.

In addition to nomadic theory—and briefly, before meandering on—the second textual space where I have found affirmation for remaining with conceptual tensions while also going with conceptual flows, is an essay by Patti Lather. Lather's (2006) essay, "Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with" has remained with me since I was first introduced to it in my Research Methodologies class. Lather figures "paradigm proliferation" as normal and beneficial—and her arguments proclaim that it is okay—even desirable and

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> through them' (Deleuze 1995: 137)" (p. 44). … Æffect as verb, Æffect as noun, Æffect as tongue twister and Æffect as paradoxical proposition all emphasize the dynamic aspects of attending, perceiving and perceptual learning. These lived paradoxes of measure rife with hesitations mark the beginning of a practice of embodied cognition. (p. 60)

As a further note of interest, the "letter of the Old English Latin alphabet, [Æ] was called æsc ('ash tree') after the Anglo-Saxon *futhorc* rune ᚫ, which it transliterated; its traditional name in English is still ash" (Æ, n.d., para. 1).

[62] I am guessing that Braidotti is referring "enchanted materialism" back particularly to Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), as well as, perhaps, Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1719).

productive—to become-untamed—to situate one's work in a 'wild profusion of existing things' (Foucault, 1970, p. xv)" (p. 36). In fact, she declares a need to foster " 'epistemological diversity' outside of consensus models" (p. 36). And so we move on….

Transdisciplinarity

Over the course of my study, I have ranged through and across not only a number of philosophies but also disciplines (e.g., philosophy, psychology, theology, mythology, biology cosmology, poetry, art…) as I conceptually, æffectively, and aesthetically engaged my questions. My aim all along has been—insofar as I have been able and aware—to think, write, and create in a transdisciplinary[63] mode—that is, drawing from Nicolescu (2010), to think/create not only between and across disciplinary boundaries, but "beyond disciplines"—and to consider the "logic of the included middle" or the "Hidden Third" (p. 22), as one way, offered by this approach, to try to move beyond binaristic categories, such as subject-object, body-mind, and nature-culture. In "a logic of the 'included middle'," says Guattari (1989), "black and white are indistinct . . . the beautiful coexists with the ugly, the inside with the outside, the 'good' object with the bad" (p. 141). Interpreting the prefix *trans-* (of transdisciplinary) to mean *beyond* gives us a way to think and create beyond disciplines—which "leads us to an immense space of new knowledge" (Nicolescu, 2010, p. 22). Transdisciplinarity, according to Montuori (2010), "provides researchers with a way of thinking and a way of organizing knowledge and informing action that can assist them in

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[63] The term transdisciplinarity first appeared three decades ago almost simultaneously in the works of Jean Piaget, Edgar Morin, and Erich Jantsch. It was coined to give expression to a need that was perceived—especially in the area of education—to celebrate the transgression of disciplinary boundaries, an act that far surpassed the multidisciplinary and the interdisciplinary approaches. Today, the transdisciplinary approach is being rediscovered, unveiled, and utilized rapidly to meet the unprecedented challenges of our troubled world. (Nicolescu, 2002, p. 1)

tackling the complexity of the world. … [T]he project of transdisciplinarity is an emancipatory one" (p. 123).

I turned in the beginning to Kagan (2011, 2012), Montuori (2004, 2010), Morin and Kern (1999), and Nicolescu (2002, 2008, 2010, 2012) as I began to grapple with transdisciplinary thinking and complexity. I challenged myself thoroughly in this effort, as I sought to embody new ways of perceiving, thinking, writing and creating—and of being and becoming in a time of mass extinction. I set this challenge because I believe it is central to the reinvention of the human for which Berry calls, starting with myself as nomadic subject. (It is a practiced awareness that goes against my training, and so is not easy, and I am sure I have often slipped!) Morin and Kern (1999) stress the importance for our times of the *work of relearning to think*: "The reform in thinking is…key…[and] implies a mental revolution of considerably greater proportions than the Copernican revolution. *Never before in the history of humanity have the responsibilities of thinking weighed so crushingly on us* (p. 132, italics added).

Enacting this research with transdisciplinary intent also helped to integrate *theoria* (theory, the intellectual act), *praxis* (practice, engagement through action) and *poïesis* (shaping, imaginal, art-making) (Knill et al., 2005, p. 32) as I sought multidimensional, living "answers" to my questions. As an embedded subject in this research, I looked to transdisciplinarity as a way to transpose my own dis-eased ontological and epistemological understandings, dis/embodiment and repressions/expression that stubbornly linger in the residues of modernity. To those who might project "impossible" upon such a scope, Kagan (2011) responds for me: "To the reflexive researcher, such a wide horizon … shatter[s] the illusion of a full knowledge of all relevant discourses…" (p. 19). I don't wish to give the

impression that I am literate in multiple distinct disciplines, nor am I excluding the need for experts. I am aiming to glimpse the relationships of disciplines and discourses as they weave our complex webs of human knowledge and meaning—like Indra's net, of the Buddhist tradition:

> [O]n each of the knots of [Indra's] net is a jewel; each of the jewels reflects and extends the light on all the others. When we understand this resonance in terms of how we create, teach, and inquire alongside one another, we recognize the incalculable abundance of the one in the many and the many in the one and our collective capacity to effect change. (Neilsen, in Springgay et al., 2008, p. xv)

This image of Indra's net reminds me of Whitehead's emphasis on creativity, the "ever ongoing process through which the cosmos continues in being. …[whereby] " 'the many become one and are increased by one' " (Cobb, 2008, quoting Whitehead, p. 66).

Braidotti (2006) is also instructive here, as I contemplate the implications of what I understand is not just a dissertation exercise, but my life's work: "Nomadic philosophy [which I think of as a manifestation of transdisciplinarity] mobilizes one's affectivity and enacts the desire for in-depth transformations in the status of the kind of subjects we have become. Such in-depth changes, however, are at best demanding and at worst painful processes" (p. 204).

Process-Relational Philosophy

Additionally, and relatedly, this work is rooted in process-relational philosophy, a designation that enfolds the philosophical and theological work of a broad and deep genealogy that has ancient roots and postmodern variations. Inherent to many indigenous cultures, to some Eastern philosophical currents (e.g., Daoism, Buddhism[64]), and to the Heraclitean strand of Greek thought, postmodern Western variations follow from philosophers such as Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854), and Henri Bergson (1859-1941) (Ivakhiv, 2010). Informed by these philosophers and others (e.g., Charles S. Pierce, William James, John Dewey)—and "thinking the space-time of relativity with and against Einstein" (Stengers, 2011, p. 4) [65]—Alfred North Whitehead (1933, 1967; Whitehead et al. 1978, original 1929) articulated one of the main contemporary branches of process-relational philosophy, which he called the "philosophy of organism," and which is variously now known today as constructive, reconstructive or cosmological postmodernism (e.g., Cobb & Griffin, 1976; Ferré, 1996, 1998, 2001; Griffin, 2007; Keller & Daniell, 2002). Philosopher of religion, Charles Hartshorne, following from Whitehead, is generally credited, along with Whitehead himself, for initiating "process theology" (Cobb & Griffin, 1976).

Another related stream of process-relational philosophy, also following from Spinoza and Bergson, came by way of Continental philosophy, especially though the poststructuralism of Gilles Deleuze and Féliz Guattari (e.g., 1987). This branch additionally

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64 "Buddhism…is the one great tradition in human thought and life that consciously and explicitly affirms a process view of reality" (Cobb, 2012, para. 6).

65 A reference to the significance to Whitehead of the scientific revolution initiated by Einstein's Theories of Relativity (1905, 1916)

moved through the existentialist and phenomenological philosophies of Frederick Nietzsche, and Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Martin Heidegger (Colebrook, 2002).

Material feminists (e.g., Braidotti, 2006, 2010; Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Coole & Frost, 2010; Grosz, 1994, 1999, 2011) in dialogue with predominantly text-centered poststructuralism, have enriched process-relational philosophy by critically and ethically bringing attention to material bodies embedded in nature—bringing "the materiality of the human body and the natural world into the forefront" (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008, p. 1), thus, making "matter matter" more (p. 5). "New materialisms" (Coole & Frost, 2010) differ from the "old" materialism, in that matter is conceived—not as inert substance, reducible to exchangeable parts, for instrumental and commodifiable ends—but as vital, creative, complex, plural, dynamic and radically phenomenological.

Panpsychism or panexperientialism (e.g., Ford, 2002; Griffin, 1998, 2007; Mathews, 2003; Skrbina, 2005) are relevant terms that need a mention here, which point to the important process-relational character of a cosmology of immanence. Skrbina acknowledges that the more widely used term, panpsychism, has ambiguous and sometimes contradictory definitions; interpretive variety and acceptability depends on philosophically contested, typically anthropocentric concepts such as consciousness, mind, sentience and soul (p. 15-16). While considering various alternatives, and attempting to avoid contentious terms, Skrbina offers the following functional definition: "All objects, or systems of objects, possess a singular inner experience of the world around them" (p. 16). Panexperientialism, "the most fully articulated form of panpsychism" (Skrbina, p. 21), or pansubjectivism are terms offered by Whiteheadian process philosopher David Griffin, which "avoid the historical association of psyche with substance and consciousness" (Ford, p. 82). Whitehead, whose philosophy

Griffin interprets with these terms, conceives fundamental metaphysical reality to be composed of temporal events [or *actual occasions*] rather than substance (Ford, p. 82); his "position is that most experience [even by humans] is not characterized by consciousness. … [E]xperience is ubiquitous, consciousness is scarce" (Ford, p. 82). As I move further through this study, which requires the contemplation of philosophies of consciousness/mind, I hold the panexperientialist position alongside Bateson's (1972, 1979, 1987) "ecology of mind" and "epistemology of the sacred"; Nicolescu's "Hidden Third"; Plumwood's (2002) "intentional panpsychism"; Mathews' (2003) call for reunification of "mentality with materiality" (p. 4) and emphasis on "'encounter' and 'eros' as ways of relating with nature" (Skrbina, p, 234); Braidotti's (2006) concept of zoe; Bohm's (1981) implicate order; the Dao (Laozi, Ames, & Hall, 2003); and the "minds within minds" of Mary Schmidt, mentioned earlier.

Process-relational philosophy, through various iterations, embraces a world and Cosmos that is cosmogenetic, dynamic, complex, immanent, embodied and embedded, relational and participatory—a world that is becoming, a Cosmos unfolding. These various strands of process-relational philosophy over time have all included central precepts about reality: "that all things are fundamentally temporal and that all things are deeply interconnected" (Ford, 2002, p. 78). In contrast to modernism's limiting and distorting lens of dualism, individualism, objectivism, instrumentalism, mechanism, reductionism and transcendentalism—process-relational philosophy conceives the "basic constituents of the world to be events of encounter, acts or moments of experience that are woven together to constitute the processes by which all things occur, unfold, and evolve" (Ivakhiv, 2008). The idea of "events of encounter" in this context—and the provocation of encounters—has

become one of the organizing principles for my research methodology. (This should become clearer later.)

While holding the important understanding that a process-relational reality is not new to human understanding—indeed, that, it has been, for millennia, part of ancient human thought and belief systems, both in some Eastern and in many indigenous cultures—it is still relatively new to Western philosophic thought. I think it is important to note that human language—and probably especially the English language that so influenced and has been so influenced by the Western modern/enlightenment era—makes very difficult the task of expressing a "new" worldview based on process-relational reality. There are numerous important particular concepts, as well as specific metaphors and other language/s, which have emerged from these various streams of process-relational philosophy—and from various philosophers (and artists and poets) and various languages/translations. While many concepts are shared or can be easily translated across the various currents of process-relational philosophy (i.e., creativity, immanence, systems), I have attempted to become more literate in and embody particular process-relational language systems, as I have moved with and through this project. (I have yet to master these languages!) For instance, Whiteheadian concepts/words, important to a process-relational discourse that I have tried to think/become with are, for example *prehension, actual occasions, eternal objects, propositions, lures for feeling, and concrescence.* Just a few of the many generative terms (Deleuze-Guattarian, translated from French) that help move us closer to an articulation through language of a process-relational cosmos are, e.g., *rhizome, nomadism, assemblage, and lines of flight.* These Deleuzean-Guattarian concepts have been adopted/adapted by some material feminists, especially by Braidotti.

Ecophilosophies: Ecosophy, Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, Vital Materialism, Indigenous Wisdom, Ecological Humanities, and Critical Extinction Studies

> Each philosophy is a daughter of its time. It is shaped by the ethos of the epoch, as well as by its problems and agonies. New epochs usually generate their own philosophies to express their *elan*. … Eco-philosophy was born because we realised that this new [ecological] crisis (unprecedented in history) was not merely a technical or environmental crisis but also a philosophical, moral and theological crisis, shaking the foundations of our deepest beliefs. (Skolimowski, n.d., para. 1-2)

Though by no means limited to the contemporary era, approaches to philosophy, which contemplate the nature of human-animal-earth-cosmic relationship, have burgeoned over the past half-century, as humans have registered scientifically, normatively/ethically, psychologically and culturally the devastating impacts of both industrial-corporate-consumer capitalist and industrial-socialist political economies to ecosystems worldwide. The publication by natural historian Rachel Carson of *Silent Spring* (1962)—which documented in lyrical prose the effects of pesticides on the environment, especially on songbirds—signaled what hopefully might be referred to as the ecological turn, or simply eco or *oikos*[66] turn—the proliferation of research and theory with a focus on ecologies, including human-nature and human-animal relationships and ethics. This body of multiple (sometimes conflicting) philosophies is referred to generally as ecophilosophy, and sometimes ecosophy; offshoots exist in ecopsychology, and eco-spirituality and eco-theology. Ecosophy is a neologism denoting "ecological wisdom" coined by Naess (1973), meaning: "a philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium. A philosophy as a kind of *sofia* wisdom, is openly

[66] The ancient Greek, *oikos*, meaning "house, dwelling place, habitation, home" gives us the prefix *eco*.

normative, it contains *both* norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements *and* hypotheses concerning the state of affairs in our universe" (p. 99, italics in original). Herzogenrath (2009) compares and contrasts the ecosophy of Naess with Guattari and Deleuze, saying they speak to an "ecophilosophy with a clear ethical orientation," while the latter pair are not fully consonant with Naess, as they "make no fundamental distinction between human and nonhuman systems" (p 10).

Guattari (1989), for instance, writes of *ecosophy* as the "the tangled paths of the tri-ecological vision" (p. 67)—the "three ecologies" or "three ecological registers" (p. 28) that includes the environmental, social relations, and human subjectivity (mental) (p. 28)—which "originate from a common ethico-aesthetic discipline" (p. 69). He makes the case that our usual conception of ecology (as environmental struggle *out there*) is flawed—and that only by widening our circle of ecological concern to include all three ecologies will we be able to æffect any changes in our social/cultural/natural ecology in any enduring way.

The late Murray Bookchin (2005) similarly began theorizing "social ecology" as far back as the 1950s and '60s, linking ecological problems to entrenched social problems—while making clear that we cannot at all adequately understand—much less seek to resolve ecological problems without also determinedly deal with problems within society (p. 462). While not alone in focusing on how eco/social problems arise from hierarchical systems of domination, Bookchin called for "far-reaching transformation of our prevailing mentality of domination into one of complementarity, in which we would see our role in the natural world as creative, supportive and deeply appreciative of the needs of nonhuman life" (p. 463). He advocated for "processual thinking … to deal with processual realities so that we can gain

some sense of *direction—practical* as well as theoretical—in dealing with our ecological problems" (p. 466).

Two of the main currents within ecophilosophy/ecosophy are Deep Ecology (Naess, 1973) and ecofeminism (see d'Eaubonne, 1974, in Merchant, 1999[67]). Ecofeminism, as I think also of deep ecology, is, as Braidotti (2006) says, "anything but a monolithic position" (p. 112). Warren (quoted in Braidotti, 2006) defines ecofeminism as "an umbrella term which captures a variety of multicultural perspectives on the nature of the connection in social systems of domination between…women…and nonhuman nature" (p. 112). While both ecofeminism and deep ecology have seen a proliferation within the literature since the 1970s, rhizomatically giving way to multiple variations, they are sometimes confluent, and sometimes contradictory. I note here that process-relational thought and ecofeminism are naturally allied. Cobb (2012) notes, "Ecofeminism and process thought were and are so close that individual women do not have to choose between them. … [M]uch of the leadership of the process movement has passed into the hands of feminist women" (para. 8).

On the other hand, some scholars maintain that ecofeminism has been misrepresented as "exclusively essentialist" (Gaard, 2010), subsequently making it difficult to recover a mislabeled term that has "redirected new feminist scholars away from ecofeminism, and led many formerly ecofeminist writers to eschew this self-descriptor and to advance their thinking within frameworks such as … material feminism" (p. 660). (Material feminism is also known as "new" or "neo-materialism/s" or "vital materialism." As material feminism, it is not to be confused with the Marxist/material feminism tradition that concerns itself with

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[67] According to Merchant (1999), French feminist, "Françoise d'Eaubonne set up *Ecologie-Féminisme* in 1972 as part of a project if 'launching a new action: ecofeminism', and in 1974 published a chapter entitled 'The Time for Ecofeminism' in her book *Feminism or Death*" (p. 24).

the material conditions of women's lives in the way of labor, reproduction, educational and political access, etc.)

Material feminists Alaimo and Heckman (2008) speak of ecofeminism having been relegated "to the backwoods" by mainstream feminist theory, "fearing that any alliance between feminism and environmentalism could only be founded upon a naïve, romantic account of reality" (p. 4). They defend as vital a feminist embrace of the material and nature, saying "the more feminist theories distant themselves from 'nature,' the more that very 'nature' is implicitly or explicitly reconfirmed as the treacherous quicksand of misogyny" (p. 4).

While I need to look more closely at the distinctions some material feminists make between themselves and ecofeminists (e.g., Grosz, in Alaimo & Heckman (2008), who see ecofeminism as primarily oriented to "ethical, moral and economic issues" rather than "ontological and epistemological claims" p. 46n1), I conceptually draw both from vital materialism or material feminism as a process-relational ecophilosophy, as well as generally from ecofeminism and deep ecology. Unlike some feminists, I do not shy away from "ecofeminism" or "deep ecology" as one way of helping to "recuperate the terms[s] and the critical history[ies] they represent" (Gaard, 2010, p. 660) in this time of mass extinction. While I've certainly more work to do to better comprehend how the complexities of new materialist/ material feminist theories emerge and diverge from ecofeminist discourses—as well as phenomenological ones—I attempt a measure of reclamation by thinking of them (and writing them) together as counterpoint.

Vital materialism—with similarities to panpsychism—concerns questions about the nature of matter and the place of embodied humans as entangled in and with other-matters.

Like other theoretical parts in our philosophical chorus, I am only able to touch upon the plentiful theory that has helped shape it. (I've only begun to know it.) Yet, I need to recognize the important position it claims for the embodied researcher in a time of mass extinction—particularly the "lived experience, corporeal practice, and biological substance" (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008, p. 4) of this researcher. Through this lens, Coole and Frost (2010) say, we are forced to think anew (or renew our thinking) about "the nature of matter and the matter of nature; about the elements of life, the resilience of the planet, and the distinctiveness of the human" (p. 6) which "call us to reorient ourselves profoundly in relation to the world, to one another and to ourselves" (p. 6). Braidotti (2006), who also considers herself a new materialist, articulates the importance of vital materialism as a new "nomadic eco-philosophy of multiple belongings" (p. 35) and an ethics of sustainability rooted in "radical immanence" and non-unitary subjectivity that enlarges our "sense of interconnection between self and other, including non-human or 'earth' others" (p. 35). I am drawn especially to that which is conjured by the words *vital materialism*[68]—and think of the term now as another thread of vibrating process-relational and eco-philosophic notes humming within the work.

Other ecophilosophically related fields that are either central to or leak into my thinking include, cosmology, and systems, complexity, Gaia (as vibrant myth), and chaos

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[68] Of the terms used to refer to material feminism, as mentioned, I especially resonate with vital materialism and vital matter/vital mattering (Bennett, 2010). These words, for me, are the most descriptive and evocative, and well—more vital, vibrant, vibrational—abuzz with becoming…. (While influenced by the work of process philosophers and phenomenologists (esp. Merleau-Ponty) of the past, contemporary authors of new materialist or vital materialist theory include, for instance, David Abrams, Stacy Alaimo, Karen Barad, Estelle Barrett, Jane Bennett, Barbara Bolt, Rosi Braidotti, Claire Colebrook, Diana Coole, Samantha Frost, Elizabeth Grosz, Donna Haraway, Susan Hekman, Tim Ingold, Bruno Latour, Freya Mathews, Val Plumwood.)

theories; these are discourses that lean heavily into the sciences. I have kept these in my periphery for their philosophical and aesthetic relevance to my enquiry.

While some ecophilosophies maintain a nature-as-utility perspective that preserves binaristic nature-culture, matter-mind, and animal-human distinctions (such as inform most environmental education and sustainable development discourses, as noted in earlier text)—many others foreground ecocentric values that emphasize interconnection and interdependency, figuring humans/culture/mind as embodied and embedded in nature/cosmos. In writing about interconnectedness a hundred years ago, naturalist John Muir (1911/1988) famously summed up this concept: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe" (para. 12; p. 110 in original).

Indigenous Wisdom

Of course, as alluded to in earlier text, many indigenous peoples/cultures around the world have inherently process-relational, ecological "philosophies"—never having shared the dominant Western worldview of a "secularized, utilitarian, depersonalized nature" (Berkes, 2008, p. 97). They have lived sustainably within ecological limits for countless millennia (while those having failed to live in ecological balance tended not to survive) (Martusewicz et al., 2011, p. 81). Their cultural mythologies and ecocentric worldviews often were/are ecologically and cosmically embedded. This diverse cultural heritage of humankind that consists of multiple sustainable views of the human-in-nature/cosmos is "akin to biodiversity as the raw material for evolutionary responses" to our times (p. 97). "The culture and traditional ethics of [many indigenous peoples] are thus significant not only for their own sake but for linking us with a millennia-old human heritage" (Berkes, p. 115). Described by Berkes as a "community-of-beings worldview" (p. 115), it signifies a cosmology in which

humans are enmeshed in the ecological web. While contemplating the meaning of education in a time of mass extinction, I am especially interested in such ecophilosophies with the emphasis on interconnectedness and embeddedness—philosophies that also align with process-relationality.[69]

Finally, I want to highlight one more strand of our process-relational/ ecophilosophical conceptual web that has been very important to me—the *ecological humanities*. Characterized by a living-systems, "connectivity ontology," the ecological humanities is an emerging transdisciplinary field, which seeks to "bridge the divide between the sciences and the humanities, and between western, eastern and indigenous ways of knowing nature" (Mumtaz & Williams, 2007, p. 8). The late, noted ecofeminist and ecosopher Val Plumwood (1993, 2002), Deborah Bird Rose (1992, 2011, 2013), and Thom van Dooren (2010, 2011) are among those central to the scholarly and aesthetic articulation of the ecological humanities. Their aims include working "across the binaries of western thought, to be responsive to indigenous people's knowledge and aspirations for justice, [and enhancing] capacity for knowledge sharing within fields of plural and diverse knowledge systems (Rose & Robin, 2004)" (Mumtaz & Williams, 2007, p. 8).

Rose, van Dooren, and other scholars have also named a new field within the ecological humanities—*Critical Extinction Studies*. The Extinction Studies Working Group identifies *time, death, generations and extinction* as the main themes informing their work.

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[69] As a curious note for further query is Grosz's (in Alaimo and Hekman, 2008) focus on the *"asystematicity"* of Darwin's work that stresses "difference, bifurcation, and division, the fracturing of a social and biological field rather than interconnectedness and wholeness" (p. 46n1)—and how to think about this in tension with Bateson's system's view of differentiation: the "communication among elements in a life-system where elemental *differences* come into relationship (Martusewicz, p. 52, italics in original).

> **Time** carries the emerging richness of intergenerational life on Earth. **Death** is the necessary counterpart to life enabling and nourishing new **generations**, which constitute ongoing patterns of embodied inheritance. … **[E]xtinction** is the violent termination of these gifts of time, death and generations. (Extinction Studies Working Group, n.d., emphasis added)

As I hope I am helping to reveal, process-relational philosophy is characteristic (while not necessarily explicitly so) of many ecophilosophies mentioned here, as it is of a number of eco-philosophers specifically (e.g., Bateson, Berry, Macy[70]—and many others). "Ecologists have joined Whiteheadians [for instance] in objecting to the tendency of modern Westerners to ignore the natural world or treat it as merely instrumental to human use" (Cobb, 2002). One significant aspect of this important connection is the adequate epistemological and ontological framework that process-relational philosophy offers the ethical and practical aspirations of ecophilosophy. A rich, creative dialogue is emergent among contemporary philosophers who are bringing these various branches into dialogue—i.e. poststructuralism, phenomenology, cosmological postmodernism, vital materialism, ecofeminisms, and other ecophilosophies (e.g., in addition to some already mentioned above: Connolly, 2010; Faber & Stephenson, 2010; Keller & Daniell, 2002; Mickey, 2008; Robinson, 2009). Furthermore, these philosophical currents are now coursing in multiple tributaries through online media environments—and so, in many regards, propagate and model the interwoven philosophies of process-relationality, including nomadic and rhizomatic theory—at least in terms the involution/evolution of thought.

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[70] For further discussion of Macy's process-relational views, see Harries-Jones, P. (1995), and Macy, J. (1991).

And now, against the background of our intricate and intimate conceptual symphosophy—a multi-voiced movement layering and enfolding process-relational philosophy, nomadology, transdisciplinarity, and ecophilosophy—let's venture into and through our Fourth Movement—an extended autoecographic reflection—*Amor Mundi and Amor Mentoris* in a Time of Mass Extinction: Encounters with Elder Teachers.

Fourth Movement

Amor Mundi and Amor Mentoris in a Time of Mass Extinction:

Encounters with Elder Teachers

First Chaos came, and then broad-bosomed Earth,

The everlasting seat of all that is,

And Love[71]. (Plato, *Symposium*)

So watch the thought and its ways with care, and let it spring from love born out of concern for all beings. ~ The Buddha

The Wisdom of Love in a Time of Mass Extinction

"'Love' is a term seldom used in academic writing" (p. 160), says Noel Charlton (2008), in his work on Bateson, *Understanding Gregory Bateson: Mind, Beauty and the Sacred Earth. "*I want to claim that love is not an abstraction," he says, "it is something one does. As with so many aspects of process, it is difficult to express verbal concepts in our noun-centered language" (p. 160). David Orr (2004) confirms Love's troubled position in the academy, saying, "Except as pejoratives, words such as *emotional bonds, fight,* and *love* are not typical of polite discourse in the sciences and social sciences" (p. 43). Mary Jo Hinsdale (2012) prompts us to remember that Love is indeed a revolutionary act in educational theory/practice, as it subverts domination through its relational necessity.

Love reminds us that to disrupt the institutional hierarchy [including, I add, among disciplines] and create egalitarian relations beyond domination, we need to look past

[71] *Eros*, in the original Greek.

> our own interests. … Education is a political act, and transformative actions are motivated by an ethic of love that acknowledges difference and mystery, yet strives for connection. (p. 39)

And, so we see, our principal subject-matter in this movement—Love—is particularly fraught with risk and danger—and profound transpositional possibility—as part of scholarly enquiry. Generally speaking, we might think of Love in education and/or leadership, especially in the academy, as *in/appropriate*.

Early in our enquiry process, I began this work with Love on the tip of my metaphorical pen—as, after all, it is absolutely central to the work—even claiming space in the work's title. Yet, it has not been easy—even knowing how to begin writing about *it*—and actually only comes now toward the end of the writing process, as I keep putting *it* off. Having been led to the in/appropriate in my research has been liberating in many ways—and one of those ways has to do with engaging my courage to write more forthrightly about the in/appropriate subjects such as love, grief, soul, the sacred, etc. After all,

It is in/appropriate

to love your subject so passionately…

So, bear with me here while I meander with a consideration[72] of Love—in the form of *amor mentoris* and *amor mundi*—toward two additional concepts/subjects central to this research: events/experiences of encounter, and the subjects of elders—which in my

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[72] *consider* ~ (v.) To ***desire with the stars***... < French *considérer* (14th cent. in Littré), < Latin *consīderāre* to look at closely, examine, contemplate, < *con-* + a radical (found also in *desīderāre* to miss, desire), according to Festus, derived < *sīdus*, *sīder-* star, constellation. The verb might thus be originally a term of astrology or augury, but such a use is not known in the Latin writers."

imagination are also tangled up *by way of Love* with other in/appropriate themes, such as reverence, awe, wisdom, and transpositional learning, among others.[73]

Amor Mentoris and *Amor Mundi*

> There is a video on YouTube of Derrida being asked by a woman called Amy to speak about love (Derrida 2007).
>
> "Love or death?" he responds.
>
> "Love, not death," Amy says. "We've heard enough about death." (McIntosh, 2012, p. 48)

After much contemplation of Love in relationship to our research problem/ opportunity—education in our time of mass extinction—I am faced with trying to name a particular type of Love. This type of Love also features importantly in two autoecographic interludes that follow in this movement (stories which have also fed my contemplations). I personally have come to know this quality of Love through several educational encounters over the years (and so consider myself fortunate, having had these experiences, in a time of

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[73] Noting that many of the terms I name here—including love, reverence and awe—take us across possible theological territory, I want to note—while I've not sufficient time or space here to follow several important theological lines of flight from and for our enquiry—that consideration of education in a time of mass extinction ultimately demands we must grapple with sticky theological questions and concerns. This, of course, is practically taboo in mainstream educational research. My wish is that this will be done in ways that are both respectful and critical of multiple religious traditions, while broadening both religious and nonreligious perspectives. Whether named or not, theological principles inform our cultural institutions at all levels, including secular education. From my experience in the classroom, I know that religious questions are always present for many—even most—students, though are seldom addressed—and even avoided. Even if it were part of our educational culture to do so, teachers are generally ill-prepared and/or fearful to address them. Various religious traditions significantly contribute to our ways of thinking, valuing and doing that result in mass extinction of life, and yet also hold answers for education in thinking, valuing and doing that serve the perpetuation and enhancement of life in a time of mass extinction.

mass extinction). As the term "pedagogical love" (which is the closest I've found in the literature) doesn't quite do it—I have come to settle on *amor mentoris*[74]. I understand *amor mentoris* as both derivative and generative of Love of the World, or *amor mundi,* which is related to *anima mundi* (World soul). Implicated in both *amor mentoris* and *amor mundi* are desire-without-lack and lures for feeling that processually lead to ethically grounded creativity, activated by the "affectivity of the imagination." So let's try to follow this complex[75] thread, first by considering *mundi* or World, and then *amor mundi, and amor mentoris*.

Mundus, on its face, is Latin for *the world, universe, heavens*. Robert Sardello (2001) extends this definition of *mundus* or World, writing that it consists of relationships, for instance, "between plant, animal, and human being on the one hand, and Earth and cosmos on the other—not just in an external way, but in according to the shared characteristic of

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[74] In trying to name this particular aspect of Love, I came to understand our one word in English—love—as both too shallow in its breadth—and not specific enough. (Is Love one of the words in the Enlish language previously mentioned that has become hollowed out by commodification? Is this one of the reasons it is so hard to write about?) With *amor mentoris,* I have Latinized the Greek, ***mentor*** (n.d.): " 'wise advisor,' 1750, from Greek Mentor, friend of Odysseus and adviser of [his son] Telemachus (but often actually Athene in disguise) in the *Odyssey*, perhaps ultimately meaning 'adviser,' because the name appears to be an agent noun of ***mentos* "intent, purpose, spirit, passion"** from PIE *mon-eyo- …." The Latin word for teacher, *magister*—translating as *master, expert* or *chief*, does not denote the same spirit as mentor. In pairing mentor with a nuanced word for Love, I am confronted, if using the Greek, with a rich array of names for different qualities of love (as should be—*eros, storge or philia, agape, ludus, pragma,* and *philautia*). Yet, not being able to peg this quality of Love exactly with any of six Greek names for love, I chose to go with the Latin, *amor,* which suitably pairs with *mentoris*. Employing the Latin *amor mentoris*—rather than English *mentor love*—better evokes something more than a flat, literal meaning, taking us into psychically richer and more mysterious, poetic realms, which more accurately define it.

[75] ***Complex*** ~ (n.d.) is from the Latin, *complexus* - *com-* together + *plexus:* plaited, or to **weave, braid, twine, entwine, encompass, embrace, comprehend**; hence perhaps originally embracing or comprehending multiple elements; **plaited together, interwoven**.

soul" (p. 44). (Remember our æffective definition of soul—like psyche and *anima*—is not a substantial, underlying entity but the quality of and condition for existence giving "meaning and vitality to experience" (Knill et al., 2005, p. 53). Psyche/soul gives rise to existential longing, love and grief; compels wonder, empathy, imagination and Art; and motivates our quest for beauty (in nature) and appreciation for Mystery, both which, in turn, nourish it.) Like Sardello, I am thinking of *World* "in a sense similar to that which had been used through a long tradition concerned with the Soul of the World, she who is also called Sophia" (p. 44). Sophia, of course, is the mythological embodiment of wisdom, immanent in World.

So *amor mundi,* then, is a compassionate and desiring Love of the World[76]—the world and cosmos permeated with soul and wisdom—and yes, too, grief. *Amor mentoris* is the Love-infused relationship/encounter between mentor and student or protégé/e, whereby *amor mundi* is generated and perpetuated though the thinking-heart's aesthetic and compassionate response to the World. And so, through a kind of relational alchemy, a process is set in motion whereby *amor mundi* generates *amor mentoris*, which generates *amor mundi.* Here is another example of process-relationality at work—a dependent co-arising of affections: we multiply and intensify *amor mundi* while practicing *amor mentoris,* and cultivate *amor mentoris* by teaching and leading from/for Love of the World.

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[76] At the heel of my footnote concerning theology… In searching key terms "love of the world," I receive results for nearly two pages that lead in one way or another to the admonition in the Biblical letters of John: "Do not love the world or anything in the world" (1 John 2:15 New International Version). The first positive spin on loving the world is a reference to *For Love of the World,* the title of Hannah Arendt's biography. And so it occurs to me (and saddens me deeply) that, while John may well have meant something else for his time, the likely far-reaching interpretation of this is passage is too often used and abused to alienate people from the World, as I am describing. And so, the ubiquity of this understanding—that the Divine is not of this World—becomes centrally problematic, especially in a time of mass extinction.

I find some parallel resonance for *amor mundi* and *amor mentoris* in Stephen Rowland's (2007) discussion of Baruch Spinoza's philosophy[77]—in particular Spinoza's idea of intellectual love. Spinoza, a pantheist (or panentheist, or even atheist, according to some interpreters), speaks of "God" (as immanent within, through and between all that exists**)** in a way that might rhetorically be replaced with *ensouled World* or *Cosmos*. Spinoza, according to Rowland (2007), associates this intellectual love with the desire for knowledge of God (World/Cosmos), which is necessarily always in process and never complete, as God is infinite—and in a process-relational theology/universe, eternally becoming:

> The more we know, however, the closer we come to God[78]. And the closer we come to [World/Cosmos], the more we become identified with [it] and take on [its] characteristics, in particular, [its] capacity for intellectual love [Wisdom and Creativity]. Intellectual love therefore gives rise, in principle, to a virtuous cycle of increasing knowledge of [the World/Cosmos] leading to increasing intellectual love [Wisdom and Creativity]. Intellectual love breeds intellectual love. … [In secular terms…] The object of intellectual love's desire – [subject-matter] – is never fully known. We may come to know better, but we can never know completely; we can find out what we wanted, but this leaves further questions for enquiry, further knowledge desired. Just as lovers desire greater intimacy with their beloved, so intellectual love always wants a more intimate acquaintance with its subject matter. Intellectual love, like personal love, is strengthened, rather than exhausted, by being expressed…[and]…is necessarily inclusive: it seeks to share rather than hoard. (p. 7-8)

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[77] Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) influenced process-relational and vital materialist philosophers, such as Whitehead, Deleuze, Braidotti, Grosz, and Bennett.

[78] For our purposes, from here, the word "God" is replaced with [World/Cosmos] and a neutral gender pronoun.

And, so, *amor mentoris* can be translated as a collaborative æffective *encounter* necessary for and intrinsic to intellectual love or *amor mundi*—from which wisdom, compassion and creativity spring. From the point of view of seeking to share rather than hoard, "collaboration is not merely a technique to [increase the desire for and/or] improve the effectiveness of learning. It is built into its very fabric: it conceives of learning [and creativity] to be essentially social rather than individual" (Rowland, 2007, p. 8).

Amor Mundi, Amor Mentoris, and Æffective Encounters with Elders

The meaning of encounters; meaningful encounters.

Having considered the important relationship between teachers/mentors and the Love of the World, we turn now, as promised, toward the subjects of encounters and elders. First, let's look at what we mean by encounter, and then reflect on the meaning and implication of elders and elder wisdom. Following, then, are two autoecographic stories involving encounters and elders.

To begin, let's consider the usual definition of the word *encounter* (n.d.)—etymologically from the "late Latin *incontrāre*, < *in* in + *contra* against"—which can be full of conflict and dispute, and even hold the possibility of violence. Among its meanings, as a noun, encounter can also mean, more benevolently, "a meeting face to face," "an amatory interview," or "an idea that suddenly presents itself, as it were by accident." As a verb, it can mean "to meet with, experience (difficulties, opposition, etc.), as well as "to face resolutely." While the meaning intended for our purposes eschews any violent conflict implied in the more modern sense, an encounter can involve conflicted grappling with/between one's perceptions and beliefs, yet with a willingness and even desire to go "face to face" with new possible becomings and reconstituted knowings. Expanding upon this concept of *encounter*

as intended for this enquiry, let's turn to Adrian Ivakhiv (2008), who says that the basic constituents of a process-relational world are "events of encounter, acts or moments of experience that are woven together to constitute the processes by which all things occur, unfold, and evolve" (para. 1). In the following extended passage, artist/philosopher of art Simon O'Sullivan (2006) helps clarify, from a process-relational perspective, a meaning that captures the creative and transpositional potential of encountering, which he distinguishes from *recognizing*.

> With [recognition] our knowledge, beliefs and values are reconfirmed. We, the world we inhabit, are reconfirmed as that which we already understood our world and ourselves to be. An object of recognition is then precisely a representation of something always already in place. With such a non-encounter our habitual way of being and acting in the world is reaffirmed and reinforced, and as a consequence no thought takes place. Indeed, we might say that representation precisely stymies thought. With a genuine encounter however the contrary is the case. Our typical ways of being in the world are challenged, our systems of knowledge disrupted. We are forced to thought. The encounter then operates as a rupture in our habitual modes of being and thus in our habitual subjectivities. It produces a cut, a crack. However, this is not the end of the story, for the rupturing encounter also contains a moment of affirmation, the affirmation of a new world, in fact a way of seeing and thinking this world differently. This is the creative moment of the encounter that obliges us to think other wise. Life, when truly is lived, is a history of these encounters, which will always necessarily occur beyond representation. (p. 1-2)

Encounters then are transpositional educational acts that provoke "experience of creative insight … engendering other, alternative ways of knowing" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 6). When learning is reproductive—and so based in homogenized, standardized, tested products of recognition with predetermined outcomes—our assumed knowledge, beliefs and values are reconfirmed, and nothing new is learned or created; we remain stuck, repeating old patterns of thought and deed. This, of course, is true on the collective, cultural level as well as individual—and its end result is necessarily a kind of expiration—the kind that is happening all around us and with increasing speed, as globalization by advanced capitalism, standardization, and the dwindling of bio- and cultural/linguistic diversity ensue. It is like breathing the same air over and over into ones' lungs—air that quickly becomes devoid of oxygen—that then suffocates. I believe we are, in this precarious moment, actually gasping for fresh air—starving for authentic encounter, connection, creativity, renewal, and Love. I also believe we can learn the arts of encounter—that conditions can be designed to incite the kind of transpositional leaps that genuine encounters provoke. Designs might include the cultivation of liminal and imaginal space, immersive experiences with other-than-human nature, genuine dialogue, story-making and telling, dream-sharing, Art and Art-making. These encounters should be key teaching-learning-leading acts to hasten our "recovery"[79] from the modern worldview; the unfolding of new stories or *re-storying* (Holden, 2009); and, perhaps, ultimately, contributing to the reinvention of our species (Berry, 1999). Encounters engender intra-actions (Barad, 2007)—whereby we become newly constituted "*in the dance of relating* ... full of the pattern of … sometimes-joined, sometimes-separate heritages both

[79] *Recover* ~ c.1300, "**to regain consciousness**," from Anglo-Fr. rekeverer (late 13c.), O.Fr. recovrer, from L. recuperare "to recover" (see recuperation). Meaning "to regain health or strength" is from early 14c.; sense of "to get (anything) back" is first attested mid-14c.

before and lateral to *this* encounter" (Haraway, 2008, p. 25, italics original). Gadamer (2001), coming from a critical hermeneutic perspective, also commented on the creative power of encounter, saying:

> Through an encounter with the other we are lifted above the confines of our own knowledge. A new horizon is disclosed that opens out what was unknown to us. In every genuine conversation this happens. We come closer to truth…. (p. 49)

It was from a desire "not to preserve, but to change" and "a deep yearning for in-depth transformation"—in tandem with a new understanding of the power of encounter—that I imagined and aimed to conjure research encounters for this project to provoke transpositional occasions. These occasions of encounter in turn became generators and incubators of data. Specific accounts of these encounters—and interpretations of data-encountered—follow in later movements (specifically Six and Seven). Central to these accounts is a primed and/or provoked daylong intermodal expressive art and dialogic encounter with/among ten retiring (*refiring*), elder professors.

Embodied, collective wisdom of the elders (including the elder archetype).

> [The elder archetype] is typically represented as a kind and wise, older father[/mother]-type figure who uses personal knowledge of people and the world to help tell stories and offer guidance that, in a mystical way, may impress upon [his/her] audience a sense of who they are and who they might become, thereby acting as a mentor. … [S/he] may be a liminal being…. (Wise old man, n.d.)

I was recently reading Barbara Kingsolver's (2012) novel, *Flight Behavior*, among whose themes include climate change, species extinction, as well as cultural decline. One passage particularly moved me, and speaks to the theme of elders as carriers of biocultural

knowledge and wisdom in the context of a time of extinction. In the scene, the protagonist, Dellarobia is hiking up a mountain in the Southern Appalachians with her mother-in-law, in the middle of February, looking for late winter flowers on which a group of wayward endangered Monarch's might be "nectaring."

> The woods possessed but one color, brown, to all appearances dead. Yet each trunk rose up in its way distinct. Shaggy bark and smooth, all reaching for the sky, come what may. Hester could have said what they were. She was a font of strange woodland names like boneset and virgin's bower, for which no person of their acquaintance seemed to have any use. That must be lonely, Dellarobia thought, to have answers whose questions had all died of natural causes. (p. 347)

After my first thought—which was actually not a thought but more a *feeling* of loneliness and loss—I wondered just how *natural* was the cause of this slipping-away of the relevance of an elder person's knowledge of her/his place. Was it more an unnatural causality of the myth of progress—whereby manufactured and commodified pharmaceuticals replaced the remedies of our grandmothers and -fathers—medicines and nourishment that were by-products of earth's diverse bounty, combined with millennia of refined cultural experimentation and adaptation—or, whereby Big Ag displaced family farms—and the native wisdom of farmers working close to the land? Perhaps it is also a causality of our dismissal of elders generally, and their "obsolete" ways of the world we think of as passé—not "modern," "advanced," or high-tech enough.

Throughout human history, elders in many cultures have held and still hold a special position, yet, not so much in the United States, where youth is fetishized, and manipulated by consumer markets. We tend to segregate and institutionalize our elders in old folks' or

nursing homes—which, euphemistically, are often now called retirement villages or communities. I have seen first-hand the detrimental æffects of isolation and alienation of elders, and know what a tremendous loss it is to our world that they are mostly ignored, sometimes forgotten, and not called upon to contribute in any meaningful way to public discourse.

While not wishing to merely romanticize elderhood—recognizing both that "a distinction between an Elder who is a keeper of knowledge and one who is merely old" (Suzuki & Knudtson, 1992, p. 227), and one must not necessarily be elder to also be wise—I do believe many elders (especially, generally, in aboriginal cultures, but even in our own) hold important truths concerning and keys for re-membering right relationships for living ethically and sustainably *together* with the Earth. Discerning the wise Elders in our own culture would begin, perhaps, by establishing cultural attitudes and behaviors towards the elderly generally that regard and respect, guarantee integrity, and include habits of inclusion and empowerment, for instance. We would have a great deal to learn from other cultures in developing these attitudes and habits.

In some cultures, and especially in primary cultures, elders are looked to for their life experience, knowledge and wisdom. David Suzuki's experiences with aboriginal peoples particularly convinced him, both as a scientist and as an environmentalist, of the power and relevance of their knowledge and worldview in a time of imminent global eco-catastrophe. This thinking was the inspiration for his book, with Peter Knudtson, *The Wisdom of the Elders*.

Suzuki and Knudtson (1992), especially in reference to indigenous elders, but also elders who are Western scientists, tell us they also have "compassionate insight and a sense

of the enduring qualities and relationships around them"; and:

> Perhaps out of a sense of their own mortality, or concern for the uncertain future of their children and grandchildren, or a burning curiosity to fit their life's work into the broader scheme of things, some … begin to ask profound questions about society's direction and have much to contribute…to society as a whole (p. 223-224).

Suzuki and Knudtson (1992) go on to point out that traditionally, in many cultures, elders are respected and valued keepers of their community's traditional knowledge, the keepers of the collective memories of our communities, and the teacher of younger generations through stories (p. 226).

> The Elders believe it is their responsibility to be caretakers of the land; this process plays out in the everyday ritual of living close to the land, and with an attitude of humility and deference. As the knowledge keepers of the communities, the Elders share their knowledge by showing and by role-modeling the relationship everyone needs to establish with the Earth. (p. 227)

While I have not yet had the benefit of learning from indigenous elders, as such—nor even from my own grandparents who mostly died too young, and were either gone prior to or shortly after my birth—I have learned tremendously from other wise elders (including, I might add, my parents, who, while not particularly ecologically-minded, modeled and encouraged in me aesthetic, philosophical, linguistic/literary, historical, and critical awareness, and com/passion for justice). In part, because I know I have been fortunate to have experienced an abundance of *amor mentoris* and therefore *amor mundi* in my lifetime—

with my teachers/mentors having included several wise and beloved elders[80]—I have wanted all along to make this work a tribute to their wisdom and creative insight.

Of all the fine teachers/mentors that have helped to enlarge, ensoul, and *enamor* my sense of the World/Cosmos, two stand out for the purposes of our enquiry. It was in the very writing of these two stories of encounter—especially writing about Thomas—that helped me incubate and articulate the conceptual relationship between *amor mentoris* and *amor mundi.*

Alchemical Auto*eco*graphic Interlude: Encountering Thomas in a Storm

> We are returning to our native place after a long absence, meeting once again with our kin in the earth community. … The world of life, of spontaneity, the world of dawn and sunset and glittering stars in the dark night heavens, the world of wind and rain, of meadow flowers and flowing streams, of hickory and oak and maple and spruce and pineland forests, with the world of dessert sand and prairie grasses, and within all this the eagle and the hawk, the mockingbird and the chickadee, the deer and the wolf and the bear, the coyote, the raccoon, the whale and the seal, and the salmon returning upstream to spawn—all this, the wilderness world, recently rediscovered with heightened emotional sensitivity…. (Berry, 1988, p. 1-2)

I met Thomas Berry in person for the first time in 1989, in Asheville, North Carolina; I had met him by way of his now classic text, *The Dream of the Earth,* in 1988—a work, which begins with the concrete images and poetic rendering of sensuous life-scapes and familiar creatures, above. I was working at the Appalachian Consortium, at Appalachian State University, where my primary work focused on the organization and coordination of an

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[80] A few of them—younger in years than would be necessarily be considered "elder"—include, in a couple of instances, mentors younger than myself, who embody for me the elder archetype.

international conference, the *Third Biennial Linear Parks Conference: Parkways, Greenways and Riverways, The Way More Beautiful*. The Appalachian Consortium—a nonprofit organization administratively housed at Appalachian State, in operation from 1970-2004—was a partnership of Appalachian universities and other educational organizations dedicated to preserving and promoting the history, culture and heritage of Southern Appalachia. One of the consortium members at the time was *Katúah*[81]*: A Bioregional Journal of the Southern Appalachians*, a publication dedicated to preserving both cultural and ecological diversity of our region. Marnie Muller, a Consortium board member, was co-founder and editor of and contributor to *Katúah* from 1983 to 1992. Synchronistically, I had first met Marnie in 1985, at a four-day dance/movement workshop in New York City, with Anna Halprin (renowned dancer and choreographer, and early pioneer in expressive arts therapy). As a board member, Marnie expanded the Consortium's mission informally to include celebrating and preserving the ecological heritage of Southern Appalachia, alongside its cultural heritage. She and I conspired behind the scenes to make sure the conference was to have a (some might say, subversive) nonlinear element to the linear park theme.

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[81] *Katúah,* from which this journal drew its name, inspiration and purpose, denotes a bioregion (geographical area defined by physical, environmental, and cultural features) comprised by the mountain areas of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, southwestern Virginia, and northern Georgia, as defined by the principles of bioregionalism. It is said that the word "Katúah" (variations Kituwah, Kituhwa, Keetoowah, Kittowa) was adopted from a Cherokee (Tsalagi) name for the mother town or "homeland," their oldest village on the Tuckasegee River—actually one of the "seven mother towns in the Southeast" (Oneofmanyfeathers', 2104) Although the exact origins surrounding the use of Katúah as a name for the bioregion are unclear, the name may have been coined by Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann in the 1970s. Ecologists Berg and Dasmann defined bioregion in 1978 as referring "both to a geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness—to a place and the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place" (Berg & Dasmann, in Aberley, 1999, p. 23).

One of those nonlinear elements came in the form of a collaborative performance that we staged one evening during the conference. The performance consisted of Thomas reading excerpts from *The Dream of the Earth*, which was then aesthetically responded to in various combinations—musically, by Eugene Friesen (at the time, cellist with the Paul Winter Consort, living in Sugar Grove, NC) and percussionist (whose name unfortunately escapes me now)—and poetically, by Thomas Rain Crowe **(**Western North Carolina poet). The overall æffect was profound, and a highlight of the conference, as conveyed to me by many attendees (though I'm fairly sure the evening was not fully appreciated by my boss, as the event gets a one sentence nod in the conference proceedings).

But the most important part of this story for me, by far, is not this creative collaboration, billed as an Earth Year Tribute. That would be, itself, meeting Thomas—an encounter that would impact the rest of my life—and who I would later think of as my adopted grandfather (an archetype he assumed for many others, I am certain, even as he had no actual grandchildren). I'll never forget the afternoon before the performance—a Friday. While a fearsome category four storm, Hurricane Hugo, was sweeping in (and inland some 250 miles) from the Atlantic, Thomas—who was just shy of his 75th birthday—made his way to the Asheville Hilton at Biltmore, well ahead of the evening event. Whilst outside storm clouds gathered, darkening skies, wind felled trees, and rain fell sideways, swelling the French Broad and Swannanoa—Thomas, Marnie and I sat down to cups of tea in an empty conference room. I sat on the

Figure 5: Great Red Oak at Riverdale Center, Riverdale, New York. (Photo by Gretchen McHugh, thomasberry.org)

floor near Thomas. It was here that I encountered Thomas and his World—in the confines of a stale and sterile, dim, fluorescently-lit hotel conference room—not as I would have idealized in my imagination—which would have been under his beloved 300-year old Great Red Oak at the Riverdale Center for Religious Research in New York—under which he contemplated the cosmos, wrote *The Dream of the Earth* (which is dedicated to the Great Red Oak*),* and often taught and entertained students and other seekers. Thomas relished the opportunity to tell us stories of his childhood in Greensboro, some of which I would later recognize in *The Great Work*: *Our Way into the Future* (Berry, 1999), particularly in his essay called "The Meadow Across the Creek." It is here that he recalls his childhood awakening to the magic of the meadow in all its diversity, interconnectedness, and beauty—a moment's conscious awareness which, he says, became his "basic life attitude and the whole trend of my mind and the causes that I have given my efforts to…."

> I seem to come back to this moment and the impact it has had on my feeling for what is real and worthwhile in life. ... Whatever preserves and enhances this meadow in the natural cycles of its transformation is good; what is opposed to this meadow or negates it is not good. My life orientation is that simple. It is also that pervasive. It applies in economics and political orientation as well as in education and religion and whatever. (Berry, 1999, p. 12-13)

But what lingers alone in my memory are not the specifics of the lovely and loving stories he told with such vivid tenderness—it was the embodied feelings themselves, conveyed through his stories—the *wisdom of his love* (as Emmanuel Levinas defines philosophy), his belief in and desire for cosmic justice, his grief for lost meadows, his love for stars and trees and *all the children*—his profound care for the human and more-than-

human world—implanted in my heartmind as a profound learning. I'm sure it sounds cliché to modern academic sensibilities (and isn't this cynicism a problem in itself?), but I knew in those moments that I was—literally and archetypically—*sitting at the feet* of a wise elder/teacher. You might say that Thomas conveyed, as Whitehead (1929/1967) would put it, "an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas, and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it" (p. 12). In Thomas' case, this "body of knowledge" was the deeply patterned life of the meadow of his childhood as a manifestation of the cosmos itself.

Touched as I was, deeply and unexpectedly by this experience, I wept in his presence, there in a hotel conference room while a huge storm raged outside, like one might weep at a heartrending movement of music. I wept at the beauty and integrity of his language and his stories, at the depth of his love for the world and universe, the wisdom of his many years of focused contemplation, the power and force of his gentleness, and with a heightened sense of lost meadows and mountains, streams and forests and creatures I had also known. I *loved* him. And I loved the æffect that his presence and his teaching had on me—a deepening that was at once exquisitely beautiful and exquisitely sad—an aesthetic experience—a confirmation of my already knowing what was real and important, as the meadow across the creek had been for Thomas. Perhaps it can be said that Thomas provoked within me "the ultimate motive power… [a] sense of value, the sense of importance…. [in the] forms of wonder, of curiosity, of reverence, of worship, of tumultuous desire for merging personality in something beyond itself..." (Whitehead, 1967, p. 40)—a tumultuous desiring for merging myself in something beyond myself—a something in which I was actually already encompassed.

Not long after I met him in Asheville, I met Thomas again in Boone. We went for a long stroll together down the town. We imagined the ways the town and university would be different—visually and philosophically/spiritually—had it honored the presence of the creek running through the valley—rather than having forced it underground into culverts, beneath asphalt and automobiles. It was over dinner that he urged me to take up the writing life, and suggested I should study in California at Holy Names College (which I would eventually do). I would meet Thomas many times over the next 20 years—until he died in 2009 at the age of 94. What would have been my last meeting with him was preempted by his sudden death, just eleven days before I launched into doctoral studies. In so many ways, my enquiry into education in a time of mass extinction grows directly from my encounter with Thomas. I sense his gentle, concerned, and loving presence at every step of the journey.

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: Encountering Joanna and "The Work that Reconnects"

> "Break the pattern which connects the items of learning and you necessarily destroy all quality," [Bateson wrote to his fellow regents at the University of California]. … Why do schools teach almost nothing of the pattern which connects? (Bateson, 1979, p. 8]
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> "What is beauty?" I asked [Bateson] that night. He said, "Seeing the pattern which connects." (Nachmanovitch, 1981, p. 11)

It is in large measure because of my encounter with Thomas that I moved to California in 1992, for studies in culture and spirituality at Holy Names College (now University). I have numerous stories of significant and even seismic encounters with various people, places and experiences from this time. (While in school there, I literally dreamt once

that the world had been turned inside out!) Meeting Joanna Macy was just one of many remarkable people who helped to expand my sense of *amor mundi* during this time.

I first met Joanna on a chilly Thursday evening in November 1992. She was the guest lecturer in a seminar taught by Tom Hayden called "Politics and Green Spirituality." Joanna was literally back in the U.S. less than 48 hours, having just returned to her home in Berkeley from several weeks of work around the small city of Novozybkov and the surrounding Bryansk region of the Russian Republic. This is the region[82] that was on the receiving end of the highest level of radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident in the spring of 1986 (26 April). Joanna conveyed to us that evening both a sense of the devastation she witnessed, and the strength and resilience of the region's inhabitants. My memories of her visit to our classroom—or the principal learning I took away from our encounter—was not so much informational (though it was certainly this also) as it was her own deeply emotional connection to the issues of nuclear energy, weapons and waste—including feelings of grief and anger; and her compassion for and admiration of æffected people, creatures, places and planet. Traditionally forest people, the residents of this region have been disconnected from both their place and culture, as they are no longer able to visit surrounding forests because of deadly contamination by radioactive fallout.[83] She translated

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[82] According to Wikipedia (Novozybkov, n.d.), the city's population in 2010 census was 40,553, and in 1989, 44,854. "The area not suitable for human habitation … starts at 1 km west of Novozybkov city limits" (para. 5).

[83] Two days after writing the last footnotes, I pick up a just purchased used book, *Love and the Soul: Creating a Future for the Earth,* by Robert Sardello (1995), and open randomly to find this passage: "We grieve for [the people around Chernobyl] and the land, and for the sickness of life. But the grief is deeper, for this scene tells us that life as it once was is no longer possible. What those people experience in an intense way images the condition and situation of Earth as a whole. …[T]heir grieving is also ours. …[T]his event of radiation in the world signals the loss of what life has been. Every cell of the body feels this loss, and

her experience for us mostly through stories—and also by way of the Elm Dance, which she taught us that evening. By way of this simple but powerful ritual dance, others and I, in an embodied, affective way, were able to participate in feeling and respond to with intention the distressing situation of our brothers and sisters and the land across the world.

The people she met and worked with then, in Novozybkov, continue to inspire and influence her work today. She includes their story of hardship and resilience in all of her classes and workshops, as she also teaches the Elm Dance, which has become a powerful collective ritual form to celebrate the commitment of the region's people to life and solidarities with ecojustice activists the world over. Joanna says of the Elm Dance that it has become an expression of their—and our—will to live—in solidarity, despite the increasingly devastating conditions we are creating for life across the planet.

Joanna talks about our times as the *Great Turning*—a name for the primary undertaking of our time—shifting from the business-as-usual Industrial Growth Society to a life-sustaining civilization—requiring a radical transposition from a violent and destructive economic system to one that reflects a collective realization that we belong to a living, relational, and self-organizing cosmos, and that the sustainability of the planet depends on our honoring all of creation. Of the radical uncertainty that is the necessary condition we must embrace as part of this Great Turning, she says:

> I know the Great Turning is happening. At the same time, I know we're not sure how the story will end. I want so much to feel sure. I want to be able to tell people, "Don't worry, it's going to be okay." And you know what, I realize it will not be doing anyone a favor. First of all, we can't know. Secondly, if somehow, we could be given

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within each one of us exists a deep and uncontrollable sobbing that has not, for most, come to the surface as yet." (p. 92)

> a pill to be convinced, don't worry, it's going to turn out okay, will that elicit from us our greatest creativity and courage? *No*... It's that knife-edge of uncertainty where we come live to our truest power. (Landry, 2014)

Encountering Joanna on Another Coast

It is May 2013 and I have arrived at Stone Circles in Mebane, North Carolina. I am here with about twenty-seven others to participate in a ten-day intensive training workshop with elder-teacher, Joanna Macy, who is (then) 84-years of age. I know I am in for an engaging and deepening encounter with this wise woman's profound work. Joanna's methodology, which she calls "the work that reconnects," is grounded in both her scholarly knowledge and life-practices of general systems theory, deep ecology, and Mahayana Buddhism.

The idea of reconnection, in part, comes from one of her teachers, Gregory Bateson. The reference to *reconnection* derives from his famous phrase, "the pattern that connects," which refers to the centrality and necessity for integrity of relationships in the life-web. Joanna's methods aim to re/establish various connections—or bring awareness to existing connections—on multiple levels: the personal level—thought to feeling, mind/psyche to body; the social level—individual to community; the ecological level—human community to biosphere; biosphere to zoesphere to cosmos. Or, as Dahr Jamail (2015) simply puts it, *the work that reconnects* "helps people essentially do nothing more mysterious than telling the truth about what we see, know and feel is happening to our world" (2015, para. 8).

Joanna has imagined *the work that reconnects* as an inner journey that appears like a spiral, interconnecting four successive stages or movements that feed into one another in a constantly renewing patterned process. The journey begins in *gratitude and affirmation*; it *owns and honors our pain* for the world; imagines possibilities in *seeing through new eyes*, especially by having a greater appreciation for systems thinking; and activates change when participants *go forth* in our communities.

> "Our most passionate feelings—our most intimate loves, our most overwhelming fears, our most heartrending griefs, our blackest despair—are these really spoken, even to those we love and trust? Are they really heard? Certainly not in our abundant talk of environmental matters, argued so cogently and so ferociously documented so carefully, denounced so righteously, described so beautifully. Yes, they are difficult to put into words—more so when they concern not the human only but the natural world as well. But we sense they are widely shared. In the urgency of our situation, this speechlessness is mysterious. In hiding the depth of our concern for others, perhaps we also hide it from ourselves. Would it make a difference if we were able to be more courageous in speaking it?" (Shierry Weber Nicholsen, 2002, p. 7-8)

The ten-day intensive in Mebane consists of a variety of embodied learning methods, including informational sessions (e.g., a day-long session on systems theory, and a panel presentation on energy issues specific to North Carolina); experiential and meditative exercises to engage/empower the imagination (e.g., connecting to Deep Time); arts-based exploration (i.e., singing, dancing, dreamwork); mindfulness practices (e.g., a full day of silence, eating meals in silence); integrative ritual (e.g., the Truth Mandala); and large and small group and dyadic sharing.

The Truth Mandala is probably the most viscerally powerful and transformational experience of the week for almost all participants. Its significance accrues as the rest of the week unfolds. By design, it follows on the heels of—the morning after—the panel

presentation on energy, which in no uncertain terms, casts in stark relief the dangers and dilemmas posed by energy-intensive lifestyles fueled by extractive non-renewable resources. Dangers include both contemporary impacts on vulnerable communities in our region, and frightening projections, for example, coming from climate scientists. Featured on the panel are expert speaker-activists Sarah Vekasi on coal extraction by mountain top removal in Appalachia; Don Safer, on Oak Ridge National Laboratory and nuclear power issues; Sammy Slade from North Carolina Waste Awareness and Reduction Network (N.C. W.A.R.N.) on details of current NC policies and legislation involving huge (preconstruction) electric rate hikes; and Tamara Matheson on hydraulic-fracturing (fracking). Facts and trends, backed with science, are laid bare. This session is provocative in its æffect, deeply stirring the passions of participants. Even while most had come already fairly well informed about the issues, the æffect of having the various interconnected pieces thus apocalyptically arranged by activists working on the frontlines is profound.

And so, we gather the following morning for the "Truth Mandala" ritual, which "provides a simple, respectful, whole group structure for owning and honoring our pain for the world, and for recognizing its authority and the solidarity it can bring" (Macy, 1998, p. 101). Joanna explains to us the origins of the practice, which—growing out of her work on *despair and personal empowerment in the nuclear age* (1983)—spontaneously emerged in 1992 when she was conducting a "large, tension-filled" workshop in Frankfurt, on the day of reunification between East and West Germany (p. 101).

Following a silent breakfast, around 9:00, we gather in an open pavilion, surrounded by trees. After silently moving to/being moved by the Elm Dance (some 20 years after my first Elm Dance encounter), we arrange ourselves into two tight concentric circles, "creating

a containment vessel - or an alchemical vessel for holding and cooking the truth" (p. 101). The circular space we enclose becomes the "mandala," which is then divided into four quadrants, with an opening in the center. In each quadrant rests a symbolic object: a round stone, a small pile of dead leaves, a thick stick, and an empty bowl. Joanna explains the symbolism of each object, which is not hard to guess. The stone represents fear. As she has also written, the stone symbolizes "how our heart feels when we're afraid: tight, contracted, hard. In this quadrant we can speak our fear" (p. 101). The dry leaves embody our sorrow and grief. "There is great sadness within us for what we see happening to our world, our lives, and for what is passing from us, day to day" (p. 101). The stick is for anger. "There is anger and outrage in us that needs to be spoken for clarity of mind and purpose. This stick is not for hitting with or waving around, but for grasping hard with both hands - it's strong enough for that" (p. 102). In the fourth quadrant is an empty bowl, which "stands for our sense of deprivation and need, our hunger for what's missing—our emptiness" (p. 102). Joanna explains that the ground of the mandala is hope, and dedicates the Truth Mandala to the welfare of all beings and the healing of our world. She further explains the process, which includes directions for brevity (for brevity can give rise to power), a request for pledges of confidentiality, and for deep, respectful witnessing. Finally, we are asked to affirm each participant's "truth" with a gentle "we hear you."

To begin, from silence, we deepen the liminal space with a shared vocal tone, a simple "ah," which moves our collective breath and voices. Joanna has explained that in Sanskrit, the syllable "ah" stands for "all that has been unsaid—all those whose voices have been taken from them, or not yet heard" (p. 103). One by one, then, people take turns, rising and stepping into the circle. Some tell stories relating to specific instances of loss or anger, while others convey a more generalized anguish. An African-American woman wails out a haunting Negro spiritual in the very center of the circle. More than one person steps forward to declare their feeling of numbness. The woman I am rooming with for the week cries with both sorrow and anger as she tells of the many suicides in her economically ravaged hometown, where many middle-aged men, often jobless, feel betrayed and discarded by society. "The men are dying," she whispers. There is not an inauthentic moment in the passage of two hours, during which most everyone risks vulnerability—publically giving voice to his or her anguish for the world. Elements of

> Why are we most reluctant to speak what is most important to us? Because full speech exposes us fully. In speaking the fullness of our loves and our fears we find ourselves suddenly outside the enclosure of privacy. This vulnerability lies at the root of our speechlessness. Our loving binds us intimately with people and other life forms, and in opening to love we know that the objects of our love are vulnerable as well. Thus we are vulnerable to partial or complete loss. We can lose what we love. We can lose our own capacities to function. We thus become vulnerable to our own desire to avoid pain and to the collective forces of denial and destruction. // We are silent with others so that our vulnerability, and the vulnerability of our loved ones, will escape their notice. Our loves remain unspoken. Even alone we are silent in an effort to ignore our vulnerability. Certain things thus become unspeakable. But this unspeaking itself is experienced as a silencing, and intimidation. Intimidated into silence, we are deprived of the intimate voice that speaks fully of our precious loves and nightmarish fears. Mute, we pass our days in private retreat, renouncing engagement that speech might allow us to have. (Nicholsen, 2002, p. 7-8)

spontaneity and improvisation give rise to a jazz chorus of grieving and raging. Joanna reminds us that each time we speak—giving voice to grief, anger, fear, emptiness—we do so for many others, too. The nature of ritual, she reminds us, allows us to speak archetypally—not just as individual selves, through the illusion of separateness and isolation, but on behalf of others, people, creatures, and the Earth. Like Paul Hawken, Joanna understands our grief, anger and fear as the Earth's immune response to suffering—or, as Hawken (2007) puts it, these visceral emotions are an "immune response to resist and heal the effects of political corruption, economic disease, and ecological degradation, whether they are the result of free-markets, religious or political ideologies" (p. 12).

After every body and all voices have been given a chance for expression, Joanna begins to draw the ritual to a close. A great deal of energy has been aroused, animated, and released—resulting in the solemn, gentle air that palpably envelops the group. Joanna draws our attentions again to each quadrant in the mandala, and in so doing further reveals the deeper significance of each. Each emotion or set of emotions, symbolized by different objects, has what she calls a "tantric flip," like a coin with two sides, she explains. Grief and sorrow are actually measures of love. We only mourn that for which we deeply care. "Blessed are they who mourn," she says, quoting the Biblical Matthew; adding, "Blessed are those who weep for the desecration of life, because in them life still burns clear" (Macy, 1998, p. 104). To speak our fear confirms and affirms our courage and trust. Anger arises from passion for justice—from knowing that justice is not yet done. Desolation, hollowness despair—as symbolized by the empty bowl—means there is space for the new; there is potential, possibility, and hope.

Joanna Macy and Expressive Arts meet Rosi Braidotti and Judith Butler

> So that became … the most pivotal point in … the landscape of my life, that dance with despair, to see how we are called to not run from the discomfort and not run from the grief or the feelings of outrage or even fear and that, if we can be fearless, to be with our pain, it turns. It doesn't stay static. It only doesn't change if we refuse to look at it. But when we look at it, when we take it in our hands, when we can just be with it and keep breathing, then it turns. It turns to reveal its other face, and the other face of our pain for the world is our love for the world, our absolutely inseparable connectedness with all life. (Macy, 2010, radio interview)

Rosi Braidotti (2010) says that we have been and are being historically driven into a situation in which "we need to think differently about who we are in the process of becoming" (p. 142). Braidotti is concerned that our world has become so negative in its æffects—and that traditional communities of resistance ("the left") have given way to "negative passions"—and to collective mourning and melancholia—stymying the activation of sufficiently vigorous, creative political and other energies to confront, counter and/or transpose the major issues of our age, beginning with their complex causes. Braidotti is also critical of social and political theory that stresses vulnerability, precarity and mortality.

"[T]he context we are operating in is saturated with its own negativity," she says. Consider, for instance: "the environmental concerns and the multiple 'natural disasters' that punctuate our existence, to the state of perennial warfare we have entered since 2001—which includes the militarization of the social space and of all border controls" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 142). This constant state of alert and fear has been cultivated, and is present everywhere, including in our educational spaces. Braidotti sees "a hefty necro-political dimension" in

current bio-political governance, fueling "a political economy of negative passions" (p. 142). Her prescription and her desire, inspired by Deleuze-Guattari, is to engage a conatus[84] of affirmative politics and affectivity, to transpose negative into positive passions—or *potestas* (destructive, undermining power) to *potentia* (creative force).[85]

Braidotti (2005/2006) is also critical of a "politics of mourning and melancholia," which she sees as prevalent in certain recent intellectual theories, for instance in the psychoanalytic and deconstructive ethics of Butler, and Derrida (via Levinas and Blanchot) (para. 18). Braidotti's aim, again, while inspired by the "neo-vitalism" of Deleuze and Guattari, is to "affirm the force of the affirmative and posit an ethics based on the transformation of negative into positive passions" (para. 18), while focused "on the politics of life itself as a relentlessly generative force" (2010, p. 142). This "life itself" is *zoe*, which for Braidotti, borrowing, yet departing from, Giorgio Agamben, is also "bare life." Later, Braidotti (2010) corrects herself, or others' interpretations of her criticism of Butler, saying:

> I do not want to suggest that the politics of mourning and the political economy of melancholia are intrinsically reactive or necessarily negative. A number of critical theorists argue forcefully the case for the productive nature of melancholia and its potential for creating solidarity (Butler, 2004; Gilroy, 2004). I am also convinced that

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84 *Conatus* (n.d.) ~ "In early philosophies of psychology and metaphysics, conatus (/koʊˈneɪtəs/; Latin for 'effort; endeavor; impulse, inclination, tendency; undertaking; striving') is an **innate inclination of a thing to continue to exist and enhance itself**. This "thing" may be mind, matter or a combination of both" (para. 1).

85 Braidotti (2011) further explains these two terms, *potentia* and *potestas*, by way of Deleuze, who argued that "the creative pole of power as potentia" is the result of a gathered "force from some energetic core or vibrating hub of activity," as opposed to "the restrictive pole of institutionalized power as potestas, which can only replicate and perpetuate. Only potential or joyful affirmation [has] the power to generate qualitative shifts in the processes of becoming" (p. 151).

> melancholia expresses a form of loyalty through identification with the wound of others and hence that it promotes ecology of belonging by upholding the collective memory of trauma or pain. My argument is rather that the politics of melancholia has become so dominant in our culture that it ends up functioning like a self-fulfilling prophecy, which leaves very small margins for alternative approaches. I want to argue therefore for the need to experiment with other ethical relations as a way of producing an ethics of affirmation. (Braidotti, 2010, p. 142)

We will return to Braidotti's prescription and desire for an ethics of affirmation after briefly turning to Butler (2004, 2009), who, to my eye, writes beautifully and forcefully on/with "grievability" and mourning, of which Braidotti, at least partially, has been critical. Butler (2004) asks us, significantly, to reimagine "the possibility of community on the basis of vulnerability and loss" (p. 20). While Butler's focus in asking, "*What makes for a grievable life?*" (italics original) is principally on the human in this particular text, we must extend this question, in a time of mass extinction, to more-than-human life (she would surely agree), and ask, as she does, "Whose lives count as lives?" (p. 20).

First let's think with Butler (2009) about this idea of grievability, or "a presupposition for the life that matters" (p. 14). It is easy to translate this idea to the more-than-human in a time of mass extinction, as she writes, "Without grievability, there is no life, or, rather, there is something living that is other than life. Instead, 'there is a life that will never have been lived', sustained by no regard, no testimony, and ungrieved when lost" (p. 15). I am reminded again of conservation biologist, Michael Soulé's (2007) premise that only that which we love enough can be saved—which doesn't necessarily translate to *will be saved*. And so it follows that only that which is grievable—and then grieved—can we attempt to

save. “To grieve,” says Butler (2004), “…may be understood as the slow process by which we develop a point of identification with suffering itself.” Grief, as such, is not to be reconciled to inaction, but becomes a resource for a politics (p. 30) and the overthrow of destructive ideologies and practices, rooted in love and the desire to save.

Butler (2004) asks: “Is there something to be gained from grieving, from tarrying with grief…” (p. 30)—which recalls for me the lines of one of Rilke’s (2005) *Sonnets to Orpheus,* that says, “Only when we tarry do we touch the holy” (p. 99).

> Is there something to be gained in the political domain by maintaining grief as part of the framework within which we think our international ties [and, I add, ecological relations]? If we stay with the sense of loss, are we left feeling only passive and powerless, as some might fear? Or are we, rather, returned to a sense of human vulnerability, to our collective responsibility for the physical lives of one another? (Butler, 2004, p. 30)

Butler’s call for tying collecting mourning to collective responsibility as political force—Braidotti’s *potentia*—is imperative. In reflecting upon the “innumerable losses” dramatically experienced by social movements especially, she asks if the perspective of mourning might help empower communities to “begin to apprehend the contemporary global situation” (p. 28)—including, I’ll add, the planetary/ecological situation. The idea of reimagining—of identifying and cultivating—community through shared losses and mourning is a vital one, I believe, particularly for our times—again, *becoming-We*. Butler (2009), conceiving community as “a social network of hands” (p. 14) on which survival depends, further writes:

> Many people think that grief is privatizing, that it returns us to a solitary situation and is, in that sense, depoliticizing. But I think it furnishes a sense of political community of a complex order, and it does this first of all by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility. If my fate is not originally or finally separable from yours, then the "we" is traversed by a relationality that we cannot easily argue against; or, rather, we can argue against it, but we would be denying something fundamental about the social conditions of our very formation. (Butler, 2004, p. 22)

A Partnership in the Perpetual Dance of Loving and Mourning

A key point I want to make, as I think Joanna Macy would also, is that Braidotti and Butler actually need each other as partners in the perpetual dance of loving and mourning that is fundamental to "bare life"—even if it were a time of "ordinary" extinctions. And while both philosophers offer important and compelling commentary and theories for our times, neither (as far as I know their work) offer methodologies for either grieving productively, nor for transposing negative into positive passions towards an affirmative, sustainable ethic. (Grieving productively, I believe, must be done, at any rate, as part of a transpositional process.) I am convinced that Macy's *work that reconnects* gives us practical and powerful methods for doing both. I imagine this work informing educational and leadership practice that might help nomadically move us—transpose us individually and collectively—toward more just and sustainable lives—lives that inevitably are always lived in the balance.

The Work that Reconnects and The Truth Mandala

How do we transpose what we are often taught to think of as negative passions—some of which are rightly endemic to our times of multiple crises, and others insidiously propelled by our dominant cultural and educational institutions in the West—among them, as Braidotti (2006) might suggest, are fear, anger, nostalgia (p. 83); guilt, envy, competition, resentment (p. 198) (I will add boredom and alienation)—to positive passions—joyful-becoming (p. 157), pleasure, affirmation, desire, sensuality, connection, empathy (p. 200)—I will add beauty and love—in the process enhancing *potentia*—or a radical force for empowerment (p. 160) that is one's own intensity (p. 155)—the positive power of expression (p. 94)—productive and enabling (p. 264)? More succinctly, in one breath, how do we transpose negative passions to positive ones? Braidotti (2006, 2011), as we have seen, maintains we must evoke these transpositions and cultivate our *potentia* to enact a sustainable ethics. As also mentioned, she rather leaves us on our own to figure out *how* to do this. I believe Joanna Macy's transpositional *work that reconnects*—especially in concert with expressive arts poïesis and praxis—helps us answer this important question of *how.*

I contend that Macy's methodology assists the "qualitative leap through and across pain" as "the gesture that actualises affirmative ways of becoming […and constructs…] hope as a collective social project" (Braidotti, 2009, p. 53). The Truth Mandala is one powerful model for ritualizing and transposing the gamut of emotions and feelings that are our individually and collectively embodied responses to a suffering world—which left unattended, can have a numbing, immobilizing, and/or destructive æffect.

Macy's *work that reconnects,* among other things, facilitates mourning and raging—and transpositions—by guiding participants through a shared experiential expression of cumulative psychic and moral injury[86] and loss. Butler says, "[O]ne mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly forever.

> Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (perhaps one should say submitting to a transformation) the full result of which one cannot know in advance. There is losing, as we know, but there is also the transformative effect of loss, and this latter cannot be charted or planned. (Butler, 2004, p. 21)

The work that reconnects is also, in the Braidottian sense, affirmative in multiple ways, and leads through various affects "essentially and intrinsically [to] the expression of joy and positivity" (2011, p. 165). Communal rituals such as the Truth Mandala, especially when combined with other arts-based modalities (as offered by the field of expressive arts therapy and education), are powerful means for precipitating transpositions, and meet the criteria—which Braidotti (2011) says is necessary for affirmation (the transformation of negative into positive passions)—of materialization "in very concrete, embodied conditions of expression" (p. 165).

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[86] While not at all wishing to detract from the specificity of this important term as applied to traumatized veterans of war (Shay, 2014), I employ the term here because we need to think similarly about what happens to us when we know we are living by means that clearly produce planetary destruction, including mass extinction of species. Our moral injury may not be as immediately dramatic or traumatic as those inflicted by exploding bombs, piercing bullets, or the inflictions of torture, but I believe they nevertheless inflict a steady chipping away at psyche and soul that are apparent, for example, in depression, anxiety, substance abuse, suicide, and other self-and-other-destructive states of bodymind and actions—Braidotti's negative passions. (Please see Appendix E for further reflection on moral injury.)

Framing this transpositional process as an ethical one, Braidotti (2011) says that transforming negative into positive passions is about *moving through and beyond* pain. Macy would concur. *The work that reconnects* and expressive arts practices activate and help subjects identify and work through affects such as grief and rage and fear, and, as Braidotti writes, referencing Bauman and Sontag, involve "compassionate witnessing of the pain of others…in the mode of empathetic copresence" (p. 290).

Describing an aspect of what Braidotti (2006) calls "the despotic force of power" she refers to as *potestas* (p. 39), Macy (1998) says:

> Repression takes a mammoth toll on our energy, and also on our sensitivity to the world around us. Repression is not a local anesthetic. If we won't feel pain, we won't feel much else, either—both love and losses are less intense, the sky is less vivid, pleasures muted. [Quoting a doctor who works with Vietnam vets, she writes,] *The mind pays for its deadening to the state of our world by giving up its capacity for joy and flexibility.* (Macy, 1998, p. 34)

It is important reiterate that it is not the "negative" emotions such as grief, fear, etc. that Macy sees as problematic in themselves, but the repression of these emotions/feelings. Repression feeds potestas. Braidotti (2011) similarly warns of the danger in shutting down affective responses, for instance, to trauma and pain.

> What is negative about negative affects is not a normative value judgment but rather the effect of arrest, blockage, rigidification, that comes as a result of a blow, a shock, an act of violence, betrayal, a trauma, or just intense boredom. Negative passions do not merely destroy the self, but also harm the self's capacity to relate to others - both human and non human others, and thus to grow in and through others. (p. 288)

The idea of the tantric flip, conceptualized from Macy's insights stemming from her study of Buddhism—in this case Vajrayana (also known as Tantric Buddhism)—is methodologically significant as a practice (imagined as a pedagogical practice) for identifying, expressing, and then *moving through* so-called "negative passions" that, left unclaimed or repressed, give rise to *potestas*—to "positive passions" that foster *potentia*. This is, of course, not something that happens at once and is then finished. Especially in a time of mass extinction, perpetual war, and climate disruption, I regard it as a necessarily enduring, reiterative, and alchemical process—looping as a Möbius band of grief, despair, fear, anger, etc.—and love, courage, and trust—whose movement generates and releases vital energies such as gratitude, solidarity, creative resistance, beauty, empathy and compassion—toward a social horizon of active hope.

Finally (*not!*), and perhaps it goes without saying, it is important to think of these psychic states—passions both "negative" and "positive"—as æffecting not only individuals, one at a time, but relationally, and as having a collective æffect on people and culture (including educational spaces). One of the many reasons that *the work that reconnects* is so powerful is that it is a deeply relational, communal practice, involving vulnerable expression and empathetic witnessing. And, as I've mentioned, it works on an archetypal level. As individuals become transposed, so becomes the community of witnesses. Perhaps, so too, is the habitus of our archetypal dwelling.

I repeatedly return a statement by James Hillman (1981), and I believe it is fitting here. Hillman's experience as a psychotherapist led him to the conclusion that he could not "distinguish clearly between neurosis of self and neurosis of world, psychopathology of self and psychopathology of world" (p. 93). Continuing, he says, "to place neurosis and

psychopathology solely in personal reality is a delusional repression of what is actually, realistically, being experienced" (p. 93). I think of collective repression of feelings/emotions such as grief and love as æffectively creating a toxic psychic field, which then gives rise to further disconnection and a range of violations/violences—from domestic abuses (substance, child, spousal, elder, animal) to war and other desecrations of life. James Hillman (1981) argued that in order to heal the world, we must return psychic reality to the world; the world must be re-ensouled. It is our imaginative recognition of and aesthetic response to things with our thinking-hearts that animates the world and returns it to soul—to a living, responsive psychic reality. Macy's methods of engaging in *the work that reconnects*, especially in combination with the practice of expressive arts, do just this.[87]

As we close our Fourth Movement, I hope I have successfully demonstrated, in part through autoecographic reflection, examples of the transpositional leap, propelled by the affectivity of the imagination, desire, and love, through genuine encounters, in the presence of elders, as examples of renewed pedagogy in/for a time of mass extinction. We will extend some of the themes from Movement Four to Movement Six, as we visit a Day of Encounters with Elders, which, in turn, generates data for consideration in Movement Seven. Movement

87 At a later time, I would also like to consider the ways in which the "four paths of creation spirituality" work as another model of transpositional practice. Dominican friar and German mystic, Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1327) first conceptualized the "four paths" as a politically conscious, of-the-world spirituality—in contrast to the neo-Platonic triple way of purgation, illumination, and union. The *four paths,* briefly explained below, were resurrected and updated by contemporary theologian Matthew Fox (2000), to address our ecologically imperiled and justice-starved age. Braidotti's positive passions are recognizable along the path known as the *Via Positiva*, and include, for instance, awe, wonder, delight, and amazement. *Via Negativa* encompasses Butler's mourning and melancholia, for instance, and include, in Fox's language, uncertainty, darkness, suffering, and letting go. These first two of the four paths are existential givens. Transpositions are precipitated by *Via Creativa* (path three where creativity, passion, birthing, etc. are activated)—which yield to forms of compassion, justice, healing, and celebration, realised in the fourth path, *Via Transformativa.*

Five, meanwhile, takes another detour through theoretical territory, as we further consider our (e)merging meta-methodological ecology that is also a hermeneutics of becoming.

Fifth Movement

Wilding[89] the Margins of Academia:

An (E)merging Meta-Methodological Ecology (Methodology, Part II)

> [S]hattered [are] all the familiar landmarks of my thought - our thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography - breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction[s]. (Foucault, 1970, p. xv)
>
> When we stay within a set of assumptions, our findings are domesticated, but when we undermine the divisions that separate pubic from private, individual from collective, and nature from culture, our work grows wild. (Grumet, in Krall, 1994, p. vii)

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: *Late Winter. I have just met with my committee and the pressure is on to name a methodology. I am drawn to many possibilities—and know for sure that I want to somehow take an arts-informed approach—but remain uncommitted. It has been suggested by one member that I consider a theoretical dissertation. I am curious, but have to think about it. I come home, feeling discouraged and a bit lost, yet determined. That afternoon, I search "theoretical research methods" and am led in short order to a*

[89] *wilding* ~ ˈwīldiNG ~ (also wildling |-liNG|) noun: a wild plant, esp. an apple tree descended from cultivated varieties, or its fruit. wild·ing (wīl′dĭng) *n.* 1. A plant that grows wild or has escaped from cultivation, especially a wild apple tree or its fruit. 2. A wild animal. *adj.* 1. Growing wild; not cultivated. 2. Undomesticated. (*Webster's II new college dictionary*, 1995, p. 1263)

syllabus from a California Institute of Integral Studies graduate course taught by Jorge N. Ferrer: WWP8510 Theoretical Research Methods*. I have read and loved Ferrer, who writes about creativity and integral transformative education—and have returned a number of times to his 2006 essay,* The Four Seasons of Integral Education: A Participatory Proposal. *Aimed at doctoral students, it proposes the co-creative participation of all human dimensions, including "body, vital, heart, mind, and consciousness … in the unfolding of learning and inquiry" (p. 11). This speaks deeply to the kind of embodied and embedded researcher/writer/leader/educator/artist/activist I want to become. I am immediately intrigued by Ferrer's syllabus, especially with recommended readings. For the first week of class he has his students read Hans-Georg Gadamer's "Praise of Theory." Something about the title… I find it in the library and check it out. Gadamer leads me to hermeneutics.*

> It seems helpful to recall here the original Greek sense of theory, *theoria*. The word means observing (the constellations, for example), being an onlooker (at a play, for instance), or a delegate participating in a festival. It does not mean a mere "seeing" that establishes what is present or stores up information. *Contemplatio* does not dwell on a particular entity, but in a region. Theoria is not so much the individual momentary act as a way of comporting oneself, a position and condition. It is "being present" in the lovely double sense that means that the person is not only present but completely present. Participants in a ritual or ceremony are present in this way when they are engrossed in their participation as such, and this always includes their participating equally with others or possible others. Thus theory is not in the first instance a behavior whereby we control an object or put it at our disposal by explaining it. It has to do with a good of another kind…a good…that bears its own

fruit…theory as a life force in which all…have a share…. (Gadamer, 1980/1998, p. 31-32)

Naming the Not-Yet in a Time of Extinction: Hermeneutics of Becoming

In part, because I am wary of research that aims to "control an object or put it at our disposal by explaining it"—and also because of my temperament, as well as the nature of my research topic itself—my approach to this enquiry is unequivocally and necessarily qualitative. That is, I wish to generate and collect "expressions about … experience and analyze or synthesize those expressions in order to understand and clarify…experience" (Polkinghorne, 2006, p. 68). I want to know and to conjure "theory as a life force" via my research and writing as I consider Love and Grief in a time of mass extinction—along with their attendant affective and aesthetic moods and senses. I am clear that this enquiry cannot be about measured numbers of things and other such "objective" data, but is to be enacted in the embodied and embedded, subjective, intersubjective, and imaginal realms and encounters with, between, and beyond the heart-mind-psyche-soul-body, place, story and Art. I want to be ceremonially present to my subject/s—and to my writing. This necessitates a fundamental[90] shaking-up of ingrained habits of thinking and doing—reading and discerning. It entails "slow scholarship" (Hartman & Darab, 2012) and "(e)merging methodologies" (Honan & Sellers, 2008), which, for this work, borrow from (and hopefully add to—in the processal spirit of "the many becoming one, and increased by one") postmodern (metamodern?[91]) and dialogical hermeneutics, hermeneutic phenomenology, alchemical

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[90] The root *fundamental* is Latin *fundus:* the bottom; also, a piece of land.

[91] In an effort engage yet move beyond postmodernism, I am "trying on" metamodernism, Vermeulen & van den Akker's (2010) attempt to describe "post-postmodernism" as a condition oscillating "between a modern enthusiasm and a postmodern irony, between hope and melancholy, between naïveté and knowingness, empathy and

hermeneutics, arts-informed and expressive-arts-informed research practices, and autoecography. As such, my methodology becomes a meta-methodology—a methodology about methodology—whereby, in attempting to integrate different approaches to hermeneutic enquiry that speak both to my question and to this researcher, I look for existing patterns or interesting relationships (with an intention of creating and amplifying new patterns and relationships) within an ecology of multiple research approaches. With it in mind that "complexity theory underlies the ecological perspective," this project emerged with and from, and at once became embodied in the writing itself "as part of a web of relations that stretch beyond interpersonal interactions, cultural norms, and historical processes to [more-than]-human…systems" (Luce-Kapler, 2004, p. 20). While also thinking of writing as landscape, I recognize with Val Plumwood (2006), that "the outcome of any given landscape is at a minimum biocultural, a collaborative product [for which] its multiple species and creative elements must be credited" (p. 125).

I want to briefly acknowledge here the tensions—some would say contradictions—we are working with/in, between various currents of the hermeneutic process as interpretive theory, and the anti-interpretive function of a poststructural/ Deleuze-Guattarian process of mapping. As Lorraine (in Parr, 2010) explains, "Interpretations…trace already established patterns of meaning; maps pursue connections to lines of flight…to elicit further maps, rather than interpretations" (p. 148). I could be safe and avoid this tension—as some might advise me to do—yet I am drawn to play/work with/in this creative space to see what ecotonic[92]

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apathy, unity and plurality, totality and fragmentation, purity and ambiguity" (p. 5-6). How might this conception inform a hermeneutics of becoming? Or is there something else waiting to be named?

[92] An ecotone is a transition area between two biomes—where two communities meet and integrate. It is "the boundary between two natural communities where elements of both

propagation might arise from what are generally thought of as incongruent methodologies. As I write, I am finding my way *into, with and through* these tensions/contradictions. En route, I am committed to working toward—as Lather (2006) says are demanded—"practices of knowing with more to answer to in terms of the complexities of language and the world" (p. 36).

Interpretation and creativity.

I am working in spaces of flux and tension within a hermeneutics of becoming that on one hand asserts an interpretive relational-process, but which, on the other hand, if strictly following Deleuzean becoming, as I understand it, eschews interpretation for sheer creativity. This is just one of the many paradigmatic tensions I am trying to understand, while working with/in them. Interpretation, in my mind, is not static, and can be, in fact, a creative process; and I wonder if *sheer creativity* is even possible in the human without some sort of interpretation—that is, the integration of the past into the present is a form of interpretation—and certainly a becoming. "Deleuze … approaches creativity in opposition to static or complacent applications of techniques," says Michael Levan (2007, p. 55). Quoting Deleuze (1995), Levan writes, "We have to see creation as tracing a path between impossibilities [. . .]. Your writing has to be liquid or gaseous simply because normal perception and opinion are solid, geometric" (p. 133).

> Such creative labor involves the construction of curious "methods": drunken sobriety, populous solitude, crowned anarchy, becoming-imperceptible, stationary speed, disjunctive synthesis. These "methods" attempt to enact ruptures and create possibilities for thinking differently. It is by way of *variation* (or more specifically,

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as well as transitional species intermingle in heightened richness" (Krall, 1994, jacket). I am borrowing from the term to create a corresponding adjective.

> continuous variation) that Deleuze hopes to render the familiar strange and find the phenomenon of process anew with all of the wonder and awe it deserves. (p. 55)

Working in the ecotone.

Drawing from an explanation of the ecotone by Florence Krall (1994), I imagine a rich territory for conceptual, methodological and aesthetic wandering in the "edge-effects" of multiple theories. In light of process thinking/creating, consider these words and phrases—*change, cycles of life and death, set into play, a succession of events, complex interplay, where creatures* [I'm thinking words, ideas, paintings, poems, stories, human and more-than-human, etc.] *intermingle in mosaics or change abruptly*—extracted from the passage below.

> Change is a fundamental part of all natural communities, even those that seem stable, as the cycles of life and death set into play a succession of regenerating events. But at the ecotone change is the most evident and inevitable. To an ecologist, the "edge effect" carries the connotation of the complex interplay of life forces where plant communities, and the creatures they support, intermingle in mosaics or change abruptly. (Krall, 1994, p. 4)

As in the biologically diverse ecotone—whereby the meeting and overlay of distinct biomes creates both gradated and novel ecologies—perhaps it is possible that new ecologies of learning and knowing may emerge and surprise by way of wandering across disciplines, philosophies and aesthetic modalities toward mutations and metamorphoses, conversions and convergences, transformations and transpositions. The ecotone is also considered "a place of danger [and]/or opportunity, a testing ground" (Ecotone Journal, 2014).

"[A]gainst the limits of our conceptual frameworks that are so much about what we have already ceased to be" (Lather, 2006, p. 40), I sense an urgency for—and an excitement

in participating in—creative/experimental forms of enquiry within and without the academy—or as I am now positioned, at its edges. With overlapping and entwined ecologies of nature/culture/language/institution in the process of immense upheaval and change—with so much to lose—and suffering at stake—by narrowly and habitually reproducing spent, restricted and/or flawed systems of knowing, valuing and doing—I am coming to understand and appreciate the need for locating and creating—and creating within—wilding—the margins of academia—margins which must necessarily and consciously extend into our multiple communities.

It is in these wild and fecund marginal places that offer/inspire desire (*à la* Deleuze)—allurement (*à la* Swimme)—lures for feeling (*à la* Whitehead) —"life's longing for itself" (*à la* Gibran). I keep thinking I see clues here for the future of education in a time of extinction. Perhaps it is in looking over my shoulder—with a foot still in the "safe" zones of normalcy, regulation and acceptability—that ironically (or not, really) haunts my becoming with disquiet and often alienation. When I am not exhausted and/or frightened from this long wandering in the borderlands, acclimating to the strange, attuned to new and curious relationships, remaining vulnerable for the next involution and strong for the next effort at integration, I am left to wonder if it is possible to know a scholarly home as the old academy wanes. Maybe that shouldn't ultimately matter. No. Times of precarity necessitate conscious and willing vulnerability. Radical trust in the process is required to approach and remain in proximity to

> … the limit of intelligibility [that] is the boundary 'where thought stops what it cannot bear to know, what it must shut out to think as it does' (p. 156). The intelligible is not a necessary limit, Foucault says, 'We must think that what exists is

far from filling all possible spaces' (1997, p. 40). (Lather, 2006, p. 40)

Certainly, as already declared, I do not mean to imply the need to completely abandon all that is standard within the old academy; within vigorous transdisciplinary efforts, there is absolute need for specialized knowledge and quantitative reasoning! But we must be/come aware of and caution against the many troubles that arise when patterns are broken by exclusively focused and isolated knowledge. There must be specialization, asserts Whitehead (1923/1967), but never at the expense of connection to "the one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestations" (p. 6-7).

Of course, I must also acknowledge that I am far from being alone in thinking along these lines of flight; I know there are many others working in the borderlands of academia, forging and foraging in nomadic forms of scholarship. Yet I am coming to this awareness—call it a "finding" of my research, if you will—in part, by the very process of more closely scrutinizing and welcoming the workings and wanderings of my own body-heart-mind—as I think, make art, *re-search and write a dissertation in a time of mass extinction*. Actually, I now know that my central research question, *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction*, has become, via my own process and reflection, inseparable from what it means *to conceive and wrestle with* a dissertation in a time of mass extinction. What seems to be materializing in this body of work—by way of poïesis—method, methodology, the writing itself—reveals conceptual aspects of transdisciplinarity, process and emergence. I am led to believe we must risk the dangers and embrace the possibilities of discovering and propagating challenging, exciting and valuable new species of scholarship in the liminal and

speculative[93] ecotone—thereby expanding our range in the vast and still largely unexplored ecology of mind (Bateson, 1972). I think this is something of what Lather (citing Tuhiwai Smith, 2006) intends as she urges "a 'researching back' and disrupting the rules of the research game toward practices that are 'more respectful, ethical, sympathetic and useful'"—while aiming "not just to voice the voiceless but to prevent the dying—of people, of culture, of eco-systems" (p. 44).

Subsequently, I will elaborate upon this conception of the methodological ecotone as a marginal "zone of indeterminacy" (para. 3) in light of Palmer's (2001) consideration of liminality, "the realm of Hermes, 'God of roads, crossroads, thresholds, boundaries'" (para. 21); Levine's (1997) *poiesis*[94]*;* and Romanyshyn's (2007) "research with soul in mind"—both a spatiotemporal condition and tool of a hermeneutics of becoming.

In contemplating a name for this meta-methodology, it also bears mentioning the inspiring connection between ancient Daoist thought and modern process-relational thinking, which helps reveal both my choice and the import of naming a methodology.

> Naming as power undermines the importantly creative aspect in the effective use of names. In a processal world—a world ever under construction—to be able to name something is to be able to trace out its concrete relation to you and the world, and on that basis, respond to it productively. While naming can be understood as an abstract and isolating gesture, Daoist naming personalizes a relationship, abjuring any temptation to fix what is referenced, instead understands the name as a *shared ground*

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[93] *speculative* ~ (adj.) late 14c., "**contemplative**," also "purely scientific, in theory only" (opposed to practical), from Old French *speculatif* "**worth great attention**; theoretical," or directly from Late Latin *speculativus*, from past participle stem of *speculari*. Related *speculare, specular*: Pertaining to mirrors; **mirror-like, reflective**. Pertaining to **sight or vision**. (poetic) Offering an **expansive view**; picturesque.

[94] *poiesis* ~ from Ancient Greek ποίησις (poíēsis), from ποιέω (poiéō, "to make").

> *of growing intimacy*. Such naming is presentational rather than just representational, normative rather than just descriptive, perlocutionary rather than just locutionary,[95] *a doing and a knowing rather than just a saying*. (Laozi et al., 2003, p. 45, italics added)

By way of intermodal methods of enquiry—borrowing from expressive arts theory—is, hopefully, "a doing and a knowing," a drawing out of relational connections experienced as a growing intimacy betwixt and between "self" and world. This can best be done, I believe, through, what I am naming, a *hermeneutics of becoming*.[96]

But Wait! Why a Hermeneutics of Becoming?

> One morning, wake yourself up at three in the morning and pray to the Beloved. …. Open your heart to the agony of the world and listen to what comes to you. What is your heartbreak? What robs you of sleep? What makes you cry out to God in the middle of the night? What makes you yearn with your whole being to change? Find out, because if you do, you will find a source of inextinguishable flames and tears,

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[95] In linguistics and the philosophy of mind (specifically speech act theory), a locutionary act is "the performance of an utterance, and hence of a speech act. The term equally refers to the surface meaning of an utterance. … A perlocutionary act is a speech act, as viewed at the level of its psychological consequences, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something." (Perlocutionary act, n.d.) (Wikipedia informed by Austin, John L., 1962.)

[96] A Google search reveals sparse reference to combinations of words implying a process-relational hermeneutic methodology. "Process hermeneutics" is an exception, as it reveals a postmodern return to the interpretation of biblical or other theological texts, and, as such, appears to be a developed methodology (e.g. Beardslee, Kelsey, Lull). "Dialogical hermeneutics" uncovers numerous references; at the top of "the pile," and for several pages down, is Steven Kepnes' (1992) *Text as Thou: Martin Buber's Dialogical Hermeneutics and Narrative Theology*. "Hermeneutics of becoming" yields 60 results, many of which are a variation of the same reference. Interestingly, the top references were connected to Giambattista Vico, the 18th century Italian philosopher about whom Thomas Berry wrote his doctoral thesis in 1949. See, Robbins, J. W. (1999, Fall). *A Hermeneutics of Becoming: Giambattista Vico and the Counter-Enlightenment*. I found no results for "process-relational hermeneutics."

> which will open your sacred heart. When your sacred heart is open, out of it will come a torrent of focused passion, which will give you the energy to go on and on…. So I say, don't follow your bliss: look where that has gotten us. I say follow your heartbreak. (Harvey, 2012, p. 547)
>
> There is little point to [research[97]] that doesn't *break your heart*. (Behar, 1997, in Anderson, & Glass-Coffin, 2013, p. 75)
>
> [T]he heart that breaks open can hold the whole universe. Your heart is that large. Trust it. Keep breathing..... (Macy, Breathing through, n.d.)

Before I further contextualize and put more flesh around this methodology by mapping a brief and necessarily incomplete history of hermeneutic tradition, let me try to answer a question I hear (sometimes quite loudly) in the background. Why am I doing this—complexifying what I am told by some only need be an academic exercise—taking extra time, bother, indebtedness, and, indeed, frustration—while risking disapproval and/or rejection—to transgress the already defined and institutionally sanctioned? Partly, it is simply because the unwieldy topic chose me as much as—if, indeed, not more so than—I chose it. This is "re-search as vocation"—a call "as elusive as the morning song of the birds" (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 4). It is an attempt to express and respond to both personal and collective "psychoterratic distress" or "solastalgia"—linking the state of the earth (terra) and mental-physical health—the "pain or distress caused by…negatively perceived state of one's home environment" (Albrecht et al., 2007, p. s96). Solastalgia—*the homesickness you feel when you're still at home*—"exists when there is the lived experience of the physical desolation of home" (p. s96)—our planet. It is an effort to address the "mismatch between

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[97] *Anthropology* in original.

our lived experience of the world, and our ability to conceptualise and comprehend it" (Albrecht, 2012, para. 1). It is what wakes me up at three o'clock in the morning—my heartbreak—intimately connected to desire (in its sense without lack[98]), cosmic longing, life's longing for itself. It is an engagement with the "poetics of the research process," and to the feeling of "mourning that takes root in the gap" between a particular work that will one day be finished, and the measureless work that will inevitably be left undone (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 280). It is an alchemical process involving my person, my species and all species: As a mother of two children in my 50s and a cancer survivor, the proximal death-shadow of this particular soft animal-body—intimately attached as it is to perhaps the most profound existential crisis to face humans, as well as those with whom we share the biosphere—challenges me to be daring and vulnerable, and to reach beyond personal ambition for a terminal degree. Another degree is worthless if not pursued in others' names—the names of my children, their unborn children, all the Earth's children—the two and four-legged, winged, finned, rooted and uprooted.

It is also research "as a troubling, as an ethical move outside mastery, heroism, and the wish for rescue [of myself] through some 'more adequate' research methodology" (Lather, 2007, p. 33). Significantly, it is also in *thinking, feeling, sensing, struggling with, dreaming, and doing—leading into and from—*an emergent—as yet not fully imagined—

[98] Desire without lack, I think, is similar in ways to hope without expectations. Braidotti (2011) writes: "Desire… like a long shadow projected from the past, it is a forward-moving horizon that lies ahead and toward which one moves. … Desire sketches the conditions for the future by bringing into focus the present, through the unavoidable accident of an encounter.... Here love is an intensive encounter that mobilizes the sheer quality of the light and the shape of the landscape….[evoking] nonhuman cosmic elements in the creation of a space of becoming. This indicates that desire designs a whole territory, and thus it cannot be restricted to the mere human *persona* that enacts it. We need a postanthropocentric theory of both desire and love in order to do justice to the complexity of subjects of becoming." (p. 167-168)

methodology that I am discovering and trying to articulate something *educationally meaningful in a time of mass extinction*. While I hope it becomes useful, in a way that makes a difference, I am conscious of my "partial and fluid epistemological and cultural assumptions, [sometimes] fragmented writing…and troubled notions of legitimacy" (Lather, 2007, p. 37), including, perhaps especially, authority. I am well aware that I may be moving into territory beyond my integrative and communicative capabilities, but I need to follow a strong intuition that a significant, though partial, answer to my research question lies, firstly, in the provocative act of asking such an impossible, existential question—but moreover—in the manner in which I go about attempting to answer it, including the attitudes and behaviors I embody in the process.

To reiterate: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction* has become, over the course of my research, inseparable from what it means *to conceive, create, wrestle with, gather data for, and write* a dissertation in a time of mass extinction. As far as I can see, simply uttering this question blows up "normal" or "acceptable" categories of being and knowing, valuing and doing—and thus, also, exhausted notions of standard and predictable educational purposes, goals, methods, and desired outcomes. Existentially, as a species within multispecies communities (and as individual humans, educators, researchers, leaders, communities, institutions, etc.), we are plainly in unchartered territory/waters. Or as Engelhardt (in Solnit, 2014) bluntly puts it, the "normal, the logical, the obvious, the prudent is these days a formula for, and a guarantee of, a planetary train wreck" (para. 4).

My sentences are as ineffectual as the otter's sacrifice,

my poems as pointless as a winter fan.

My one room opens to the north;

wind from the door crack pricks my face.… (Masaoka, 1997, p. 116)

Extinction Report: **the Japanese River Otter ~ *Lutra lutra whiteleyi***

Today, as I write, Gillis, in the *New York Time,* reports (2012, August 27):

> The amount of sea ice in the Arctic has fallen to the lowest level on record, a confirmation of the drastic warming in the region and a likely harbinger of larger changes to come. … [T]he extent of the sea ice [is now] less than 30 percent of the Arctic Ocean's surface, scientists said.

The fragment of the poem just read, from "Poor Man's Hut," was written in 1896 by one of Japan's most beloved poets (and a major contributor to the development of modern haiku), Masaoka Shiki. Shiki

> …likened himself to the otter for leaving his books scattered around his home, [playfully calling] himself *Dassai Sho oku Shujin* (or Otter Bookstore Owner) [because] the otter is said to lay out the fish it has caught on the riverbank, as if to ceremoniously dedicate them to the gods before eating them" ("Vox Populi," 2012).

As mentioned, I receive a daily Google alert, which sends a digest of news reports and blog entries based on the keyword, extinction. I learn today that Japan's Ministry of the Environment has declared extinct the Japanese River Otter [(*Lutra lutra whiteleyi*)—subspecies of the European or Eurasian otter (*L. lutra*)], along with the Least Horseshoe Bat, the Japanese subspecies of the Asian Black Bear, as well as one bird, one insect, one shellfish, and two plant species (specific names are not made available). According to Platt

(2012, September 5), the river otter has not been seen in more than thirty years. The one image provided on the webpage is of a stuffed otter carcass, as there are no images of the living creature in the public domain. "Once numbering in the millions, [the] otters…were overhunted for their fur, most of which was sold to foreign traders" (para. 2); they suffered further from pollution and habitat loss to human development.

Emerging from the troika of *theoria, praxis,* and *poiesis*, from dreams, art, and synchronicity, and the bodymind's sensory and psychic sensitivities, by way of intellect and affect—since its laconic verbal formation—this piercing question—*What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?*—has become a mantra, amplifying through my days, in solitude, in relationships, through night-vigils, body-prayers—a steady reverberation, syncopated with the resolve of my singular, finite heartbeat—the economy of my own becoming and perishing—at once biological, ecological, cultural, historical, philosophical.

Now I must labor to take this shuddering question from the multivalent realms of my own becoming—extract its implications from a complex flux of forces, including this heart/body/mind; you, dear reader; the melting cryosphere; the spectral Japanese River Otter and Least Horseshoe Bat; visions of my children's possible futures; and too, from the sheer air, here, the breathing between us, between us and other—Can't you feel it? —Try to bring, as I perceive them, this question's contending frequencies of radical love and fear, beauty and anger, wonder and joy and despair, alarm and surrender, all the paradoxes of living in this heartbreakingly beautiful world—into translation and earshot—in ways that I hope aesthetically will touch, persuade, disconcert, and move to endeavor — (This is education,

and leadership, no?) —colleagues, teachers, students, bosses, judges, politicians—family, friends and neighbors—to inscribe these frequencies into the particularities of research and rendering of data—*in a time of mass extinction*—to then be judged as worthy or not, to be blessed or not, by an educational institution that I am at once intimately entwined (since childhood), alienated from, deeply critical of, and, somehow, despite all the evidence, in which I still have some measure of faith. I think of Thomas Merton's words, in his 1966 *Letter to a Young Peacemaker*:

> Do not depend on the hope of results…. You may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not results opposite to what you expect. As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on results, but on the value, the rightness of the work itself. (Forest, 2008, p. 174).

Whispering in one ear is poet, Denise Levertov (2001): "How can desire fail? … So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture" (p. 245). In the other, Wislawa Szymborska (1995): "My apologies to large questions for small answers" (p. 95).

Invoking Hermes: Liminal Deities for Liminal[99] Times

Though etymological connections between *Hermes* and *hermeneutics* are contested, the Greek trickster god, Hermes, has long been associated with hermeneutics. Accordingly, as mythology has it, Hermes is a notorious thief who, according to Palmer (2001),

> …crosses the threshold of legality without a qualm. 'Marshal of dreams', he mediates between waking and dreaming, day and night. Wearer of a cap of invisibility, he can become invisible or visible at will. … Liminality or marginality is his very essence. (Para. 2)

Divine guardian of learning and memory, as well as eloquent speech and writing, Hermes is the "god of the gaps," who, according to Friedrich (in Palmer), moves by night, and dwells in the margins. He is master of cunning and deceit; a mobile creature betwixt and between; god of roads, crossroads, and groves; guide across boundaries; and mediator between earth and Netherworld, or life and death (para. 4). Smith (1991) notes yet other qualities, such as "eternal youthfulness, friendliness, prophetic power, and fertility" (p. 187). He is lover to Aphrodite—among other divine, semi-divine and mortal women, and mortal men—and father, with Aphrodite, to Hermaphroditos. Paradoxically and appropriately, it seems, this unruly trickster god helps ease my scholarly angst whilst I grapple with epistemological tensions within an entanglement of philosophical and conceptual threads. I am encouraged

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[99] We will look at liminality in more depth later in this movement. Consider for now, the word's etymology. **liminal** |ˈlimənl | adjective 1) of or relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process. 2) **occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold**. Etymology: < classical Latin līmin-, līmen threshold (see limen n.) + -al suffix, originally after German *Schwellen-*, combining form of *Schwelle* threshold (see sill n., and compare the discussion at limen n. of specific psychological uses of *Schwelle*). Liminality: Cultural Anthropol. A transitional or indeterminate state between culturally defined stages of a person's life; spec. such a state occupied during a ritual or rite of passage, characterized by a sense of solidarity between participants. Cf. ***communitas.***

that Hermes "crosses . . . ontological thresholds with ease" (Palmer, para. 2). I am thinking that it is somehow appropriate that this dubious messenger has caught up with me here, lending irony to my troubled search to choose or "name" a methodology. As indicated above, it was a series of synchronicities that led and continue to lead me down this hermeneutic path, which is only appropriate—even integral to a hermeneutics of becoming—within the realms of Hermes' influence, in these liminal times of mass extinction.

> [Maps] are always in a state of becoming… The map does not re-present the world or make the world, it is a co-constitutive production between inscription, individual and world; a production that is constantly in motion, always seeking to appear ontologically secure. … [T]hey are never fully formed but emerge in process and are mutable. Such re-imagining of maps changes in quite fundamental ways the focus of cartography, moving it away from notions of accuracy, design, aesthetics and power, to emphasizing the complex, contingent interactions between cartographers, users, maps and the world. (Dodge, Kitchin & Perkins, 2011, p. 6)

An Incomplete Cartography of Leaky Hermeneutic Spheres

I am quite conscious that the following brief overview merely scratches the surface of the long genealogy and rich literature describing/informing hermeneutics, which has evolved as a methodology, with multiple variations, over many decades—even centuries, primarily with "its roots in the interpretation of Greek classical literature" (von Zweck, Paterson, & Pentland, 2008). It is obviously beyond my scope or ability to articulate a full sense of this

history, or, likewise, the rich, shifting philosophical terrain that has underpinned it as a research methodology. As Smith (1991) reminds me, "reviews and summaries like the [following] are inevitably incomplete and because of that, like all forms of writing they contain a certain violence" (p. 194). Additionally, I know I can read about hermeneutics 'til the cows come home; practicing hermeneutics is something I have to jump in to with both feet, trusting that I can translate difficult and unsettled theory to creating and "doing" meaning as reasonable praxis. As van Manen (1990) confirms, "There is a difference between comprehending the project of [hermeneutic] phenomenology intellectually and understanding it 'from the inside'….real understanding…can only be accomplished by 'actively doing it'" (p. 8). While I continue to consider and develop my knowledge of the historical and philosophical currents within the hermeneutic tradition, for the purposes of this study, I will generally lean in to postmodern/poststructural hermeneutics, hermeneutic phenomenology, and dialogical and alchemical hermeneutics, as I seek to enact and articulate a *hermeneutics of becoming*, with a conceptual cartography of process-relations, emergence, nomadism, and transdisciplinarity at its heart.

Hermeneutics, most broadly conceived, is "the theory of interpreting oral traditions, verbal communications, and aesthetic products" (Slattery, 2006, p. 130). Though differing, sometimes conflicting understandings of the role of hermeneutics span time and historical circumstance, hermeneutic philosophers generally insist, "all human endeavours involve hermeneutic interpretation" (Slattery, Krasny, & O'Malley, 2007, p. 538). Smith (1991) points to three themes that have been consistently present in hermeneutic enquiry: "the inherent creativity of interpretation, the pivotal role of language in human understanding, and the interplay of part to whole in the process" (p. 190).

Once thought to be derived from the Greek myths in which Hermes was the messenger of the gods, the word hermeneutics "suggests the interpretive process of communication" (Delanty, 1997, p. 42). (Even if not literally so, this connection of Hermes to hermeneutics brilliantly works metaphorically.) Hermes, as previously suggested, not only explained and interpreted the messages of the gods, but was also often deceptive in his role as messenger of the gods; paradoxically, his messages were both clear and ambiguous. His double-voice becomes a metaphor for interpretation in postmodern theory (Slattery et al., 2007, p. 540). Significantly, this understanding celebrates "the irony of interpretation by recognizing that ambiguity is integral to the human condition and the natural world" (Slattery, 2006, p. 130).

The Hermeneutic Tradition, Circumscribed

> The returning of life to its original difficulty is … a return to the essential generativity of human life, a sense of life in which there is always something left to say, with all of the difficulty, risk and ambiguity that such generativity entails. Hermeneutic inquiry is thus concerned with the ambiguous nature of life itself. (Jardine, in Slattery, 2006, p. 115)

Hermeneutics has a long history as a formal interpretive methodology, with its secondary roots in Biblical exegesis beginning in the seventeenth-century. It is traditionally conceived of as "the science of textual interpretation"—and in the nineteenth century, via German, Protestant theologian and philosopher, Frederick Schleiermacher—as "a science of human meaning" (Delanty, 1997, p. 42); as well as "the art of interpretation" (Schleiermacher, 1986). It is important to note that interpretation differs from analysis. While analysis breaks down something into its constituent parts in order to obtain meaning,

interpretation seeks meaning by considering a broad context, including histories, relationships, and processes. In this way, I believe, hermeneutic interpretation is apropos for contemplating questions of meaning in the context of ecological (systems) concerns.

Slattery (2006) writes that some see hermeneutic interpretation as "intersubjective communication and answerability"[100] (p. 115). Buber's (1923/1958) I-Thou relationship is an example of intersubjectivity. *Answerability,* according to Slattery et al. (2007), is inherent in Bakhtin's dialogic epistemology (his perspective on hermeneutics), and "incorporates the role of imagination in the process of organizing and interpreting the events of our lives as teachers, scholars, and citizens" (p. 538). Further, Slattery instructs, answerability maintains that human agents in on-going dialogue are "charged with the responsibility of seeing that texts whether cultural artifacts, institutions, persons, or events, function ethically" (p. 539).

Hermeneutics has developed over time in various iterations to be applied broadly to the interpretation of any "text," allowing for multiple methodological approaches. Slattery (2006) names and overviews at least six ways to describe hermeneutics (p. 131). In sum, these six are 1) *traditional theological hermeneutics* (by a magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church); 2) *conservative hermeneutics* (Schleiermacher, 1768-1834; Dilthey, 1833-

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[100] Intersubjectivity and answerability are references to "dialogical hermeneutics" developed primarily by Martin Buber and Mikhail Bakhtin (1981). Buber's (1923/1958) "Creative answerability/ responsibility," according to Maguire (2006), is a dialogic view of authoring a self that is "**answerable not only to the social environment but also for the authoring of its responses…[which requires] researchers to confront issues of voice, consciousness, emotionality and answerability/responsibility in authoring self and others**" (p. 6). Contrast to Gadamer (2001): "Oh, please spare me that completely misleading concept of intersubjectivity, of a subjectivism doubled!" Emphasis should be on the subject-matter: "[A] conversation is something one gets caught up in, in which one gets involved" (p. 59). The "measure of a real conversation [is] the degree to which one is caught up in the subject matter that measures the value of dialogue" (p. 59). I ask, "Why not both intersubjectivity and subject-matter?"

1911 [Buber's teacher]; and Hirsch, b. 1928); 3) *contextual hermeneutics* (Gadamer, 1900-2002); 4) *reflective hermeneutics* (Ricouer, 1913-2005); 5) *poststructural hermeneutics* (inspired by Nietzsche, Husserl and Heidegger, and practiced by Kristeva, Baudrillard, Derrida and Foucault); and 6) *critical hermeneutics* (inspired by Marx, Freud, Habermas, Marcuse, Gramsci, and the Frankfurt school). These approaches sometimes intersect and inform one another, with variations ranging from the "empirical science of interpretation of canonical religious texts" by expert exegetes "who establish criteria for authoritative textual interpretation"—to "playing with words of the text rather than using them to find truth in or beyond text" (Slattery, 2006, p. 131-132).

Hermeneutic phenomenology encompasses the work of Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricouer and others. According to Max van Manen (2011, para. 1-4), Heidegger maintained that human awareness, in all its forms, is interpretive, while in his later texts he presented poetry and art as modalities for "interpreting the nature of truth, language, thinking, dwelling, and being." Gadamer, Heidegger's student, "carefully explored [among other things] the role of language, the nature of questioning, the phenomenology of human conversation." Ricoeur argued that, for instance, "meanings are not given directly to us," making necessary a "hermeneutic detour through the symbolic apparatus of the culture." Hermeneutic phenomenology, via Ricoeur, investigates human meanings as they are "deposited and mediated through myth, religion, art, and language"; and narrative and storytelling.

In searching specifically for "feminist hermeneutics," I found these key terms almost exclusively pointing to contemporary feminist Biblical interpretation; otherwise, a feminist approach most likely falls within the poststructural hermeneutic method. A *hermeneutics of*

becoming is also a feminist hermeneutics—as it works against, for instance, linearity, hierarchy, dualism, and the dead materialism of a mechanistic universe—to processually, rhizomatically, emergently, nomadically, aesthetically, and lovingly disrupt the patriarchal colonization of the bodymind.

Traditionally, the goal of hermeneutics is "to get at the hidden meanings embedded in texts" (Delanty, 1997, p. 42), and, as has been said, "in its broadest formulation, is the theory of interpreting oral traditions, verbal communications and products" (Slattery, 2006, p. 130). However, by way of Lyotard, Kent (1992) warns that the aim of hermeneutics should never be consensus—that "interpretative consensus represents a powerful myth" (p. 126).

Kent (1992), significantly, goes on to explain that consensus as an aim for hermeneutic interpretation, when undergirded by a metanarrative, "demands conformity," and thus becomes a "form of terror in the sense that players in a language-game may be conveniently silenced or omitted entirely if they do not conform to the consensus operating within a discourse community" (p. 126). Those who attempt to relate a new and different story that in/appropriately "threatens those who benefit from conformity and consensus" (p. 126) faces "the threat of silence or even ostracism" (p. 127). Kent distinguishes between positivistic hermeneutics—associated, according to Brown (1995) with Gadamer—and the dialogic hermeneutics of Bakhtin [and Buber] (p. 276). Moving from a positivistic to dialogical hermeneutics allows us "to see the terror—the threat of silence—inherent in [positivistic] hermeneutics to legitimate the stories they tell" (Kent, 1992, p. 127).

Interlude: Contemplating metanarratives and process-narratives.

> I circle "the truth" with all kinds of signs, quotation marks, and bracket, to protect it from any form of fixation or conceptualization, since it is one of those words that constantly crosses our universe in a dazzling wake, but is also pursued with suspicion. I will talk about truth again, without which (without the word *truth*, without the mystery *truth*) there would be no writing. It is what writing wants. But it "(the truth)" is totally down below and a long way off. (Cixous, 1994, p. 6)

At this point I need to make a brief, but important aside. I want to acknowledge my first reference to "metanarrative," a word/concept I have been—perhaps unconsciously—avoiding. Ultimately, I am forced to contend with concepts such as metanarrative and metaphysics, and I want to acknowledge my conflict here. I understand how some might argue that metaphysical systems that align with both reasoned contemplations and intuitions must be rejected in a postmodern discourse on the basis of their metanarrative tendencies. The metaphysical systems I refer to are closely related and overlap: e.g. Whitehead's carefully articulated system of a processal universe; Berry's cosmogenesis; Nicolescu's transdisciplinary *in vivo* ("within the living") epistemology that works alongside an ontology including "the logic of the included middle," connecting and corresponding subject and object to one other; Bohm's *implicate order* that points to internal relatedness—"the enfoldment of everything into everything" (Banathy & Jenlink, 2005, p. 7); Teilhard's and Berry's cosmogenic universe; the monist philosophy of the Dao, and Buddhist concept of interdependent or dependent co-arising or origination.

While I certainly recognize why metanarratives can be dangerous, as they tend to serve interests of power as a way of control to maintain power, I want to argue here that

process-relational philosophies as expressions of emergent or interdependently co-arising systems are qualitatively *different* metanarratives. Unlike metanarratives that define monolithic, fixed Truths that legitimate hierarchical value systems used for control and domination—they leave ample room for many truths, evolving or involutionary truths, a diversity of cultural expression and creativity, and rhizomatic, non-hierarchical, ecocentric relationships. In so doing, they eschew and even undermine power as a tool of domination. Perhaps we could simply think of this qualitatively different metanarrative as a *process-relational-narrative*, whereby the "integrity of a processal worldview is not *being one*, but *becoming one* in the consummatory relationships that one is able to achieve within a context of environing particulars" (Laozi et al., 2003, p. 38). In other words, a process-relational-narrative consists of unpredictable stories of patterns forming and re-forming

> …under the influence of the patterns forming and re-forming around them. This is…an order of mutual arising, a symbiosis in which no particular form or pattern can emerge independently of the forms of patterns resolving and dissolving all around it. … [When] left to arise spontaneously in this way, under the mutual influences of one another, the universe assumes *its* own proper pattern or form—it follows *its* proper course. (Mathews, 2007, p. 67)

Constructive process thinker, Arran Gare (1995), who was writing before the dialogue between deconstructive/poststructural and constructive/cosmological postmodernisms got sufficiently underway, argued that in order to create an environmentally sustainable civilization, we actually need a metanarrative to unite humans in order to make sufficient and necessary paradigmatic changes:

> …[I]t is not enough to defend a new cosmology in opposition to the cosmology that

> has underpinned modernity. It is necessary to articulate this in such a way that it can effectively challenge the hegemonic culture, so that it can orient people in practice, in their daily lives…. To do this it will be necessary for a new grand narrative, a grand narrative based on a *philosophy of project*. (p. 139, italics added)

I believe Gare, in reacting to deconstructive postmodernism and its categorical rejection of metanarratives, is pointing to a similar idea. I believe a process-relational-narrative can help mobilize an ethic adequate to our times, and that such a *grandly dynamic narrative* inherently enfolds and unfolds a multiplicity of *petits récits* or diverse localized narratives (Lyotard, 1984, p. 60) without homogenizing them or otherwise compromising their integrity. Indeed, rather than "Grand Narrative as a concealment, even suppression, of little narratives (*des petits récits*)" (Kearney, 1998, p. 204), I think a process-relational-narrative, as imagined and articulated in the above metaphysical systems, for example, is a creative source of multiplicity and difference, at once historical and novel, as well as just and ethical.

Alchemical-autoecographic interlude: *I confess to loving strong trees (May 2013)*

I confess to loving
strong trees,
to loving deep roots
that search the dark Underworld
with Orphic longing.

I love the stretching branches
of old oaks and red maple
that desire the vast
mysteries of empty space,
of bending light,
and the phenomenal dark
maps of stars.

I love the imperceptible breathing
of trees, slow and deep,
their resilience to wind and
presence to birds.
I envy the ability of those
who let go of themselves
in a flurry of deciduous color;
of others, who stand firm
in principled green.
I want to learn a tree's
quiet attentiveness
to place, its vulnerable
nakedness in winter,
the communion of woods.

I confess, too, to loving
ancient traditions that enfold
into mythic time
the tree-as-symbol, often divine—
threading liminal
spaces between heaven and
earth and netherworld: *Cosmic Tree,*
World Tree, wild-olive, baobab,
ashvattha, bodhi, Sacred Fig,
the silent grove of Akademos,
cill dara, church of the oak,
Lucus, sacred grove,
the wishing tree.

Along the way, in an attempt to overthrow
modern man (sic) and his broken cosmos,
his disembodied, mechanical mind—
quantifier of Truth,
and reducer of truths—
some philosophers I know (and regard)
have, perhaps, in their quest,
misrepresented the seed becoming
radicle becoming
taproot and tree—
conceptually pitting the arboreal against
the wild multiplicity of rhizome
and wandering radican—
falsely, from my view, attributing
dualism, linearity and unmoving convention
to the tree's foundational-relational nature.

I do get what they mean, I do....

But what of the quantum fields of trees—
with their infinite number of degrees
of freedom; all that we are
unable to see
with physical eyes,
or comprehend with ordinary minds?

Perhaps it is a mistake
to limit our seeing
to unidirectional branches,
a fork as merely two,
either/or, this way or that,
and not instead:
from the crossing point—

the many becoming one
and increasing by one.

While not forsaking the fertile
meanderings of becoming—
rhizome and radican—
loosestrife, strawberry;
woodsorrel, iris—

There is resolve in this confession.
In times of mass extinction—
there is an urgency
in reclaiming strong trees,
to learn their radical patience,
their standing still,
their lingering, here...

I want to remember
as I roam and curl,
the mystery of acorns
and the wings of the maple
scattered on wind.

Hermeneutics of Becoming (continued)

According to Delany (1997), hermeneutics "evolved from an analysis of texts to the study of culture, in particular the question of how one culture can understand another removed in time" (p. 42). Delanty's suggestion to think of understanding another culture removed in time (and I assume he intends time past)—provokes my thinking of future generations, and I wonder about the use of hermeneutics for thinking about cultures becoming. According to Heidegger (in Palmer, 2001), "Each human being is in each instance in dialogue with its forbears and perhaps even more and in a more hidden manner with those who will come after it" (para. 9). As Bowers (2001) and others remind us, such are traditional practices in some native cultures in North America, whereby consideration of the health and well-being of the seventh unborn generation inform all decisions (p. 143). This understanding of hermeneutics becomes especially significant as we think with Berry's (e.g. 2006) crucible of cosmological and geological time (p. 54), and Macy's (1998) related concept of Deep Time (p. 135)—a cultivated awareness of our relationships with both ancient and future beings and events. How might I include the creation of meaning in relationship to an imagined future culture æffected by our current cascade of extinctions?[104]

I contemplate extinction,
while Deep Time
vibrates, resonates, sings,
"Come! Listen! See!"[105]

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104 "Traditional practice in some native cultures in North America [frames] decisions in terms of the well-being of the seventh unborn generation…" (Bowers, 2001, p. 143)

105 This is from my poem, *In situ: Returning to the ruins* (2012).

A (post-)postmodern hermeneutics.

Hermes, as we have seen, is an intercessor between gods and humans, the bearer of tidings of both clarity and ambiguity. 'The hermeneutic tradition confronts the issues of complexity, ambiguity, interpretation, intentionality, and meaning, and asserts the inescapable subjective in human inquiry'" (Bernard, 1994, p. 10, in Slattery, 2006, p. 130). I consider the postmodern understanding of hermeneutics as "an investigation into the ambiguous nature of being and knowledge" (Slattery, 2006, p. 116), by way of nomadic ethics and spirituality (Braidotti, 2006), as we attempt to excavate layers of meaning enfolded in my questions themselves, and in our encounters of enquiry. Metaphors or figurations from theories-in-relation that we put to work here include, e.g., nomadism, rhizome, heteroglossia, and multivocality. Our own interpretation, imaginative projection, and naming of a post-postmodern (metamodern?) hermeneutical methodology reflects possibility and *becomes* something new as we create out of it. We and our methodology will involve each other—a mutual involution.

I confess to being challenged and inspired by Slattery's warning: "Postmodern hermeneutics can be dangerous, for it uncovers, interprets, clarifies, deconstructs, and challenges" (p. 142)—which we might read in relationship to Braidotti's (2006) demanding, potentially painful processes of transposition (p. 204). Smith (1991) warns students of hermeneutics to be "mindful that their interpretation could lead them into trouble with the 'authorities'" (p. 187). It is consistent with and in/appropriate, then, to be working with this hermeneutic perspective in the ecotone—that is, as you recall, "a place of danger [and]/or opportunity, a testing ground" (Ecotone Journal, 2014). Postmodern hermeneutics is the opposite of Kent's/Lyotard's (1992) interpretations that lead to consensus, conformity, and silencing. As an imagined (post)postmodern hermeneutic form, a hermeneutics of becoming

challenges a static and consensus worldview—as so, importantly, challenges educational and other institutions that promulgate and protect hegemonic discourses that are un/consciously at the root of an unsustainable human Earth-presence.

The leaky hermeneutic circle, the nomad, the rhizome and the web: a meditation on metaphors of enquiry in tension.

> Because reality is a fluid environment composed of myriads of internally related causal nexuses rather than a world of discrete objects, it is obvious that words can never be understood in a univocal sense, as if they referred to absolutely definitive and discrete objects (Farmer, 1998, p. 95).

Central to contemporary hermeneutic processes, following principally from theories of Martin Heidegger (1962) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960/1989), is the idea of the "hermeneutic circle"—a concept and metaphor I am modifying to better express a *hermeneutics of becoming*. According to Delanty (1997), dialogue forms the basis of the hermeneutic circle, and is the primary hermeneutical method (p. 42). Continuing, he explains the hermeneutic circle and its functions of "parts" to "the whole" and the "interpreter" to "author/s":

> In order to achieve a complete [sic] understanding the interpreter must proceed by relating the whole to the parts. Units of meaning are possible only in a wider context. The hermeneutical task is to reconstruct the relationship of individual units of meaning to a meaningful context. To do this, observation is not enough since meaning cannot be subject to simple explanation and description…. Hermeneutic interpretation must be intuitive and sensitive to the multilayered realities of meaning. (p. 42-43)

Slattery (2006) points to Donald Schön's concept of reflective practice or "reflection-in-action (1983, 1991)" as a postmodern hermeneutic method of philosophical dialogue (p. 192). According to Wikipedia (Hermeneutic circle, n.d.), which I consciously refer to here (and which, incidentally, might be thought of an exemplary hermeneutic circle and dialogue), conversation is central to the hermeneutic circle as developed by Schön (1984), and "characterizes design as a hermeneutic circle that is developed by means of 'a conversation with the situation'" [original in Schön, 1984, p. 76]. This idea of a "a conversation with a situation" resonates with my hermeneutic approach, by which I aim to engage multiple "texts"—as "situations" with other humans, more-than-human, place, story, Art, and ideas and written text. Specifically, too, as described in Movements Six and Seven, elements of the Day of Encounter include/compose a literal hermeneutic circle, with Elder professors in dialogue with a multilayered situation. I think of our hermeneutic circle as an embodied "postmodern community of interpreters" (Slattery, 2006), who "engage each other in the process of understanding the text, the lived experience, and the self in relation to the Other … as a *creative act* and not just a technical function" (p. 141, italics mine).

Hermes wants to jump in again here. His cousin, *Anansi* (West African spider trickster) has arrived also—wanting a place at the circle, and a say about methodological constructs. Together they offer the element of surprise, cast the stumbling block, and give credence to intuition. These tricksters are my familiars, as I attempt to create a *hermeneutics of becoming*—and so I offer my image of the process-relational hermeneutic circle.

As I have delved into learning more about hermeneutics as a methodology, I have to admit that some panic has lurked within, as I have taken in its long historic particularities of theory and practice. Even as I feel assured by Slattery's framing of hermeneutics as a postmodern methodology, I find myself (once again) trying to "syn-aesthetically" bring

together metaphors of enquiry that, taken literally and separately, can appear contradictory. (We remember again, that one aspect that makes our particular hermeneutic circle a postmodern shape is the recognition of ambiguity as "integral to the human condition and the natural world" (Slattery, 2006, p. 130). Despite my belief in the necessity of ambiguity, my mind still seeks coherence.)

And, so, the particular metaphor in tension I want to briefly address is the hermeneutic circle. For instance, if I think of a circle as an enclosure, with fixed points and circumference, I lose the generative poststructural metaphors of nomadism, rhizome, and cartography. So, let me try to convey how I imagine my becoming-hermeneutic circle, which incorporates these mixed metaphors. Anansi is such a help!

Our circle is porous, yet it has structure; it is a boundary that contains, yet breathes. As we move within the circle, our horizons move. The circle's boundaries create a space where the strands of a hermeneutic web can rest, from which interconnected meanings and story can co-arise; we can also expect disconnected and torn threads. The circles, and in turn my writing, can "contain" our encounters, journeys, and imaginings—and magnify and focus or blur as through a moving lens—routes on our maps. There is more than one circle, within the circle of our horizon/s. (Gadamer speaks of a "fusion of horizons.") Spaces, where the circles overlap—as well as where they do not touch—are of special interest. Spaces in the web and between circles, suggest openings to the in-between: "openings like holes worn with time [reflect] the fragility and temporality of meaning" (Springgay et al., 2005, p. 906). They might even suggest wormholes![106] Braidotti (2006) tells us that transpositions are

[106] In short, a wormhole is a theoretical portal *between the worlds*. According to Brian Greene, (in Miller, 2014) a wormhole—based on the mathematics of Einstein's general relativity—"is a kind of tunnel from one location in space to another that, in principle, allows

created in the in-between spaces, and lead to the new (p. 5-6). The liminal Hermes so happens to be the "'god of the gaps'…one who inhabits an in-between realm, what Carlos Castaneda referred to as the 'crack between the worlds' " (Palmer, 2001, p. 6).

The Gap, the In-Between Realm, the Crack Between the Worlds…in a Liminal Time of Mass Extinction

In Movement Six, we will consider a particular hermeneutic circle, comprised of ten Elder professors, engaged in a shared expressive arts experience and dialogue—in liminal space-time. I/We create elemental conditions for liminality for this encounter—while *the encounter itself intensifies the liminal quality of the event*. Before we proceed to a description of this encounter, including conditions for liminality, let's pause briefly to consider the *condition* of liminality itself—which is so central to our times of mass extinction, to the *poïetic* process, to *amor mentoris*, to the experience of encounter, to our ecotonic methodology—a *hermeneutics of becoming*—and to the life of this Artist/researcher/teacher, seeker and parent. Along the way, we will also consider the concept of the imaginal and imaginal realm.

Imaginal and liminal realms.

Liminality or marginality is [Hermes'] very essence. (Palmer, 2001)

The imaginal realm (Hillman, 1981; Levine, 1997; Romanyshyn, 2007)—the locus of the imagination and also an "in-between" space—assists authentic encounters, and is key to

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you to go from the first location to the second much more quickly than if you had to travel the long way all through the distance in the outside realm itself." It takes you from one point in space to another, and "from one moment in time to another moment in time" (para. 33 & 37).

the hermeneutic circle, to dialogue, and Art-making. Coined by Henri Corbin[107], the *imaginal* differentiates "a region of reality that is intermediate between sense and intellect and that mediates between them" (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 81).

> The imaginal world is by its essence the intermediate world, and the articulation between the intellectual and the sensible, in which the Active Imagination as *imaginatio vera* is an organ of understanding mediating between intellect and sense…. (Corbin, in Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 81)

In turn, access to the imaginal realm is nurtured by *liminal* or "threshold" space-time. "[T]he liminal condition is one in which all familiar structures have been given up and new ones have not yet appeared" (Knill et al., 2005, p. 41). Levine (1997) says, "to be liminal is to be vulnerable. … At the same time, liminality implies potency, the capacity to become more than one has been" (p. 49), and in this way, is an important condition for creativity. Liminality, as Victor Turner (1990) describes, is:

> … the 'subjunctive mood' of culture, the mood of maybe, might-be, as-if, hypotheses, fantasy, conjecture, desire. … a fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, not … a random assemblage but a striving after new forms and structure, a gestation process, a fetation [state of pregnancy] of modes…. It is what goes on in nature in the fertilized egg, in the chrysalis…. (p. 11-12)

"The essence of hermeneutics [is] to be liminal," says Palmer (2001), "to mediate between realms of being [and becoming], whether between [the gods] and human beings, wakefulness and sleep, the conscious and unconscious, life and afterlife, visible and invisible, day and night" (para. 21).

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[107] French philosopher, Henri Corbin (1903-1978), was also a theologian and Islamic Studies scholar who inspired archetypal psychologist, James Hillman (1981).

A shared social space of liminality is known as *communitas* (Levine, 1997, p. 49; also, Turner & Abrahams, 2009; Turner, 2012)—such as might occur in encounters between/with other humans, the more-than-human, and the hermeneutic circle. Recognizing more-than-human contributions to this shared social spacetime, I think of *communitas* as related to the condition for "knowing [that] is a communion of subjects" (Berry, 1999, p. 54). Edith Turner (2012) writes about the "communitas of nature" (p. 144). I consciously and intuitively welcome the imaginal and endeavor to be open to and to create (with) liminality as process-relational conditions for this research, and for the encounter—soon to be described—a spacetime of *potentia* and imagination, where transpositions may occur.

Melissa Freeman (2014) says: "The hermeneutic journey is not simply about following the way of questions. As we construct an understanding of a complex topic, we are also actively engaging in a reconstruction…" (p. 831). This reconstruction, I believe, begins in the imagination, with our heart-thoughts. In our Sixth Movement, *Harvesting Gifts of the Ritual Feast*, we *encounter* an arts-based and dialogic Encounter through description that includes the conjuring of liminal space, and a hermeneutic circle involving ten Elder professors—in an engaged "reconstruction, a possible configuration of how things could be, or of how this understanding could change the world" (p. 831).

Sixth Movement

Harvesting Gifts of the Ritual Feast: Calling Forth and Enacting *Communitas*[108] in the Academy through an A/r/tographic and Dialogic Research Encounter

First, We Make Peace with *Data*

As I have moved with and through these past several moons, engaged in research and wrestling with both standard terms and conditions of dissertating, and intentional departures from these—listening to, conjuring and pondering epistemological and methodological questions—there was a point at which I wrote, "I need to make peace with this word, *data*." And so, as has become my habit (which we now know, suitably, is a hermeneutic habit), I went underground to follow data's creeping rootstalk.

Following the rhizo-etymological trail from *data* leaves a fascinating and exciting trace—which in turn, propagates new lines of flight. What I discovered opened up for me a whole new relationship to this word by flipping it completely in my imagination—and confirmed for me yet again both my question and my process.

Of course, I knew that, like the word *text*[109]—which includes much more than words lined up in sequential rows, and is related to words like *texture* and *textile*—the word *data* can and should encompass much more than an accountancy of things represented by numbers

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108 "*Communitas* is the experience of bonding as human beings in community, beyond the structure of societal roles and norms" (Levine & Levine, 2011, p. 191).

109 *textus* ~ from Latin, literally "**thing woven**," from past participle stem of *texere* "to weave, to join, fit together, braid, interweave, construct, fabricate, build," from PIE root *teks- "to weave, to fabricate, to make; make wicker or wattle framework."

to crunch this way and that, which, done properly, so it goes, have exclusive power to render "objective" reality, and reliable research outcomes. While quantitative data is, of course, vital to understanding our reality and to a science that helps us know more about the universe we inhabit—in that we can know it—this always-partial view of reality also often comes with a hubristic attitude that said "reality" can be manipulated or/or controlled. I understand this sterile and fascistic meaning of the word as an aspect of positivism's legacy—in part, caricature—that informs my bias, and my need to make peace with it. And yet, while clearly recognizing the caricature, I'll also insist that the repulsion and horror it provokes in me carries important and relevant information, as current educational culture and practice is largely institutionally captive to a politics of quantitative data: to standardization, categorization, monetization, reduction and elimination—that feeds and feeds off of the surveillance State, systemic violence, cultural and spiritual death, planetary death and mass extinction. Yet, in tapping its roots, I went from thinking-feeling of data as a kind of cultural Shadow—as arid numbers and computer code, standardized assessments and detached information—to "thing given" to "to give, grant, offer," "tribute" and "gift" to "gift, endowment, talent" to "art, art of poetry" to "(one's) lot, fate" to "what is in store for us," and even to "future s [sic] of the earth" to "disaster could be in store for the world."[110]

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[110] Following is the trail I followed, beginning with Online Etymological Dictionary (Harper, 2014), which maps "the wheel-ruts of modern English"—with adventitious roots to other sources.

data: 1640s, plural of *datum*, from Latin *datum* '(thing) given', neuter past participle of *dare* 'to give' (**see *date***). Meaning 'transmittable and storable computer information' first recorded 1946. Data processing [is merely] from 1954.

As suggested, I proceed to: ***date***: 'time', early 14c., from Old French date (13c.) 'date, day; time', from **Medieval Latin *data***, noun use of fem. singular of Latin ***datus* 'given',** past participle of ***dare* 'to give, grant, offer'**, from PIE root *do- 'to give' (cf. Sanskrit dadati 'gives', danam 'offering, present'; Old Persian dadatuv 'let him give', Old Church Slavonic

So, it is in this spirit of *data as gift*—data as art and poetry, and window into the earth's future—that I work to critically, normatively, imaginally and aesthetically understand, interpret and present—what has become a centerpiece of my research encounters: *harvesting gifts of a ritual feast.*

An Expressive/Arts-Informed, A/r/tographic Research Encounter: A "Ritual Feast"

The following pages describe and explain one of my central sources of data, and serve as my process-relational launch pad for further interpretation and imagination. I begin with an alchemical autoecographic interlude, followed by my letter of invitation to prospective participants, which, in short sum, contains the rationale for my enquiry, as well as a brief outline of method. I then elaborate and describe our encounter, as hermeneutic

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dati 'give', dani '**tribute**'; Latin donum '**gift**'; Greek didomi, didonai, 'to give, offer', doron 'gift'; Lithuanian duonis 'gift', **Old Irish dan 'gift, endowment, talent', Welsh dawn 'gift')**. // The Roman convention of closing every article of correspondence by writing "given" and the day and month -- meaning perhaps **'given to messenger'** -- led to data becoming a term for 'the time (and place) stated'.

Having especially strong connections to Irish, I was drawn to pursue further the Old Irish, *dan*, "gift, endowment, talent"; further to modern Irish, **dán** m (*genitive* dáin, *nominative plural* dánta) means:

1. **art, art of poetry**
2. poem
3. **(one's) lot, fate** [given] http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/d%C3%A1n

I go to my Irish-English dictionary (*Foclóir póca*, 1993) for collaboration, and find; *dán*...art, art of poetry; poem *an rud atá i ndán dúinn* **what is in store for us**.

Searching ***dán*** (http://www.focal.ie) I also get: **Related terms** "a bhfuil i **ndán** fir don domhan**"**

- Reiligiún · Religion
- todhchaí bain an domhain
- **future s of the earth**

Further, I searched "a bhfuil i n**dán** fir don domhan" and at the top of the pile was Na tubaistí a d'fhéadfadh a **bheith i ndán don domhan**. Translated, this is: "potential disasters facing the world," or "disaster could be in store for the world."

process, in phenomenological mode—an expression of the embodied/embedded nature of the research methodology.

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: Requiem for a Wreck and Prelude to an Idea

My committee meeting of October 2013 was a significant kind of encounter, and a wrenching transposition. From May 2013, I had been engaged in what I felt was a productive a/r/tographic process with data, following from interviews that I had travelled more than 5,000 miles to conduct in the spring. This process, in part, included painting with/to recorded interviews (simultaneous listening and painting), followed by further research and writing with/from the interviews and art. I think this process might well have yielded (and might yet yield) an important, yet completely different set of perspectives on the meaning of education in a time of mass extinction. However, I nevertheless failed—from the perspective of my committee—to meet their expectations, in terms of timing and "productive" output. I left that meeting with great disorientation and discouragement, and my process came to an abrupt standstill—as was foreshadowed by my unconscious in a dream I had had the night before our fateful meeting. And, so, I went underground.

Dream narrative: Night/morning before my committee meeting, October 1st.

I am waiting on a train platform with my committee. We are waiting for a train that is slowly wending through the mountains (reminding me of my train journey through the Cascades in the January snow, 1979), but there is talk of a potential/imminent flood that might wash out the tracks or otherwise derail or divert the train. We are waiting with anticipation, uncertainty….

Sometimes we are enveloped by the sudden Dark, and plunge without any warning, helpless and abandoned in a desolate space. When the dark night comes, it is almost impossible to resist walling ourselves off from the threat. But we have to do just that, because if we erect the wall we lose not only our souls but the Soul of the World as well. The darknesses of the fall must not be denied; they have to be passed through and they have to pass through us. The more adamant and unyielding the resistance, the more implacable and irresistible is the Dark. We must not petrify. We have to try to do the most difficult thing; become transparent and protean, like water. (Cheetham, 2005, p. 13)

After the diversion

My intuition was right—
perhaps I should have listened.
Even my dream foreshadowed
A diversion. A flood.
A potential delay.

Or maybe there is a reason
it all unfolded/imploded
just as it did

The image right
is of a painting—suspended
for the time-being—
that I had begun while listening
to the voice of my teacher,
Marlene
(an interview recorded
a few months since),
and the music of Arvo Pärt.

You will see I have begun
to layer into the work
the eyes of animals.

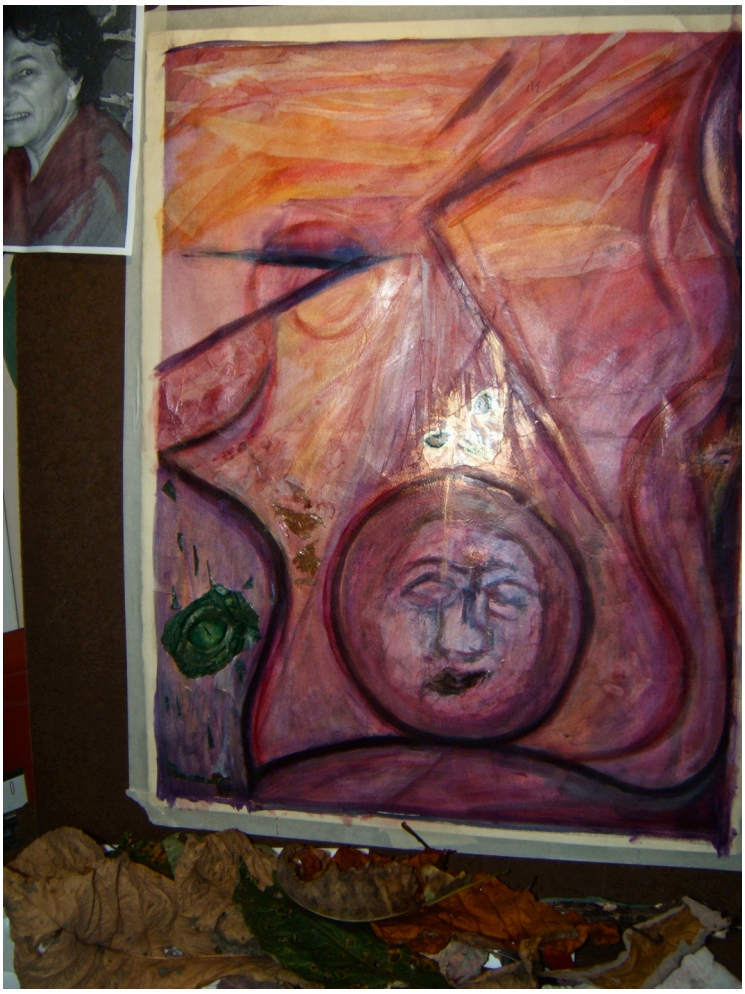

Figure 6 ~ Painting Marlene's voice, with eyes looking back…

Figure 7 ~ Elephant eye with tear

Above is the eye
of an endangered elephant
looking at me/us.

I am reeling-in
after reeling,
sinking-in,
re-orienting,
ingathering.

And, so, I return to reading
around methodologies again,
navigating proliferations…

"The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time." (Terry Tempest Williams, 2001a, p. 215)

It was out of stillness and darkness—of winter, too, with the Solstice just past—that a dream alludes to and perhaps inspires the next significant stage of my active enquiry.

> ***Dream narrative • 29 December 2013.***
>
> *Walking up a path, I come upon a gate at a boundaried/walled institution/seat of "power" (in a dark-ish, Hobbit-ish landscape). At the gate are several (mostly) older (bearded?) men who are being kept out and/or have been exiled. The ground is icy and slippery. They seem to be looking to me for assistance…. Then I am on a crowded bus, seated about three rows from the front. Three leaders have been designated (by the driver; or the driver conveys the info)—I among them. I think: "Okay, I have sufficient creativity for this," and I pick up a container (tetra-pack), open the spout, and place my lips over the narrow hole like a flute, and produce a musical sound….*

Upon awakening, I associate the people at the gate with the generation of many of my teachers—who are facing retirement at a time when much of what they have given their intellectual/spiritual lives to—is being systematically "exiled" from the university. And thus begins the incubation of an idea, which slowly takes form over the next few weeks. My vision—what I will call a research encounter—is formally tested when I invite a group of retiring professors into dialogue.

Invitation to Encounter and a Ritual Feast, 25 February 2014: *Esteemed Professors...*

An idea for gathering additional data for my study has been percolating over the course of the past several weeks—an idea, which has come to include your possible participation. Let me share, first by introducing the study via excerpts of my standard participant recruitment letter, followed by some of my latest thinking and a few details about the particular process to which I would like to invite your participation.

By way of this qualitative study, entitled, *Educating for belonging and becoming in a time of mass extinction: Encounters of love and death* [title of dissertation proposal], I am gathering perspectives (philosophical, ethical, political, emotional, aesthetic, practical…) of "elders" and experts, like yourself, who have long contemplated questions of education, ecological concerns, justice, love, and the fragile times in which we live. The purpose of this research is to consider the meaning of education as the Sixth Great Extinction unfolds—into what biologist E. O. Wilson has named the Eremozoic Era or Eremocene, the Age of Loneliness—when human activity is radically changing planetary systems (i.e. climate, oceans, rainforests, the cryosphere, cultures, etc.), causing alarming declines in biodiversity—and calling into question the viability of our own species.

Educational institutions appear unwilling and/or unable to meaningfully respond to our eco-cultural crises; their inertia and profound disconnection leads to my central question: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?* Meanwhile, even as I have been talking and reading with others and thinking and writing with this question, the radical "reform" of education itself (pre-K though post-collegiate, as we have known it)—an attritional process in the works for many years—has rapidly accelerated. I am afraid these changes signal further evidence that our educational institutions are unwilling and unable to

meaningfully address the most urgent issues of our day. While my concerns are for all levels of education, my focus for this aspect of my study is primarily on higher education. I am thinking of education itself—and the public university in particular—within the context of multiple slow-motion collapses, climate turmoil, and mass extinction.

I am also conscious that, while state and administratively imposed "structural adjustments" are creating more rigid and circumscribed conditions for teachers and students in the academy, there is a significant generational shift occurring, whereby faculty who were educated and became researchers and teachers during the optimistic and paradigm-shifting 1960s are retiring. I have heard one professor remark that the state (as seized by corporate interests) can't wait for his generation to be gone so that they can get on with the deconstruction of the university and the marketing of their new consumer product.

In my view, the exodus of this—your—generation of faculty leaves a political, cultural and philosophical rent in the ecology of the university. (That is not to say that universities will go without younger, philosophically astute and critically and politically engaged, prophetic teachers among remaining faculty.) I mean to imply that your memories and perspectives informed by your experience are unique and important and will be a particular loss to educational culture. I know the procession from one generation to the next is but an ordinary turn; yet these, indeed, are not ordinary times—nor do I think of your generation—certainly not this cohort of potential research participants—as ordinary. I am also aware that many career educators, such as yourselves, are witnessing, just as you are retiring, the systematic disempowerment of faculty, narrowing of curriculum, and dismantling of programs to which you have given your intelligence, creativity, passion, and commitment. As someone who received much of my own education from your particular age

demographic, I am especially interested in learning about your experience, what/how you are feeling, and critically and intuitively thinking about these changes in our educational culture, and what you imagine they signify within the context of intensifying eco-cultural crises. I am particularly interested in your collaborative, dialogic response to these areas of enquiry—in other words, *what collectively and affectively emerges as you share with each other these concerns in an arts-informed process and encounter.* Following is my proposal.

I would like to gather as many of you as possible in one space. I have identified fourteen of you across disciplines who are either recently retired, or in phased- or near full retirement. All will remain anonymous (except, of course, to one another) through the research process, and including in the dissertation. Following is a snapshot of what to expect during our time together.

A short morning session will be dedicated to making plaster casts of your faces—thus, creating a basic mask with which you will work/play in the afternoon. You will help each other with this process, with guidance. (One or two assistants will work with us during this process; they will follow a code of confidentiality.)

During the afternoon session, I will guide you through an intermodal expressive arts activity—whereby you will elaborate upon your mask with paint and/or other materials. Our mask-making will be followed by dialogue. We will close the day in my home, where I will have a meal prepared for you and we will sit around a "magical" dining table for further dialogue, in the spirit of ritual, imagination and celebration.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours…

Susan

Of the fourteen professors to whom I eventually sent this invitation, remarkably, ten subjects responded affirmatively and were willing and able to give a full day of their time to this experimental research. Even more remarkably, we were able to find a date and time that worked for everyone's busy schedules. Following is something of what that day looked, sounded, and felt like.

Preparing the Feast and Setting the Table: Overview of Research Encounter

> Desire is the propelling and compelling force that is driven by self-affirmation or the transformation of negative into positive passions. This is a desire not to preserve, but to change: it is a deep yearning for in-depth transformation. Empathy and compassion are key features of this nomadic yearning for in-depth transformation. … The affectivity of the imagination is the motor for these encounters and the conceptual creativity they trigger. (Braidotti, 2011, p. 229)

It is a sunny, yet windy and very cool Saturday morning, early May, and the doors to the building are still locked when I arrive (already running later than I had intended; the doors were to have been opened by security by 8:00 a.m.). Two invaluable assistants meet me then, and help contact security. Katrina and Rosa, both seasoned art teachers, had offered to help guide the mask-making process. We are joined by IT specialist, Lisa, who is to make sure various technologies are in order: cameras poised, and computer cooperative. Michael arrives to assist a wheelchair-bound participant. In addition to their valued practical help, all of these assistants bear important witness to the event.

A kind and curious young security officer finally arrives and lets us in around 9:30. Apparently, someone was to unlock the doors remotely, and that someone is out of town. (Who knew?) We have to place cardboard jams in the doors for participants, who are to begin arriving around ten o'clock.

Together, we lug to the third floor studio all the various and sundry materials and supplies—boxes, baskets and bags of paint, brushes, plaster gauze, glue, glitter, old magazines, paper, drapes of cloth, rope, a ten-foot diameter braided rug, scissors, dried leaves, old sun-bleached bones, shells, sticks, stones, feathers, and whatnot. There are four cameras, four tripods, and extra batteries; I carry my small audio recorder in my pocket.

And then there is the food. I have taken special care to provide nourishment for my participants: coffee and tea and baked goodies, homemade hummus in wraps with carrots, sweet onion and romaine, fresh melon and berries, and nuts. Though this may seem at first a frivolous detail, this gesture of nurturance, ritual, and pleasure—especially communally shared—has come to play a central function in this research project—so much so that I now am thinking of the act of feeding—symbolically and literally—as integral to both affirmative education and leadership, as well as good research—this at a time when education and research budgets are being starved—when politically imposed austerity inevitably leads to further corporatization and privatization, inequality and injustice, at the expense of a healthy public sphere and an environment of creativity and possibility, in a time of mass extinction. There is something here, too, about process-relationality. With every shared and imbibed substance also involving proposition, prehensive movement, integration, and concrescence. In the act of preparing the food, I imagined an alchemical act, consciously involving lime, cumin, coriander and cabbage, with intentions for my research, and great feeling for both subject matter and participants.

Especially having arrived later than planned (and thus becoming one of any number of examples of Time's tyranny), our setting of the room is tinged with my own anxiety—yet, in the end, it all comes together more-or-less "on time" or as planned. In an ideal world, I would have arrived early in the morning on my own, with materials having been delivered

and arranged the evening before—to center, and more mindfully and calmly cultivate the space for our purposes—both my own inner space, and the space of the room, with an emphasis on its aesthetics and ambience. Even so, the sky is clear and Spring sun bright, rendering, thankfully, the overhead buzzing and cold glare of fluorescents silenced and dark.

Truth Mandala centers a hermeneutic circle.

While Katrina and Rosa set about arranging art supplies and Michael the spread of food at the room's edges, and while Lisa activates technologies, I place my focus in the room's center, where ten (of fourteen invited) Professors will be arranged in a circle around a mandala-inspired centerpiece. To create the mandala[111], I begin with a ten-foot diameter rug, which I cover with neutral-colored sheets. I had taken several multi-colored silk scarves and drapes of cloth from my teen daughter's disused dress-up box, and place them around the outside of the circle to lend it aesthetic definition. Two long lengths of purple fabric cross the circle, making four quadrants facing north, east, south and west, each with a red votive candle; a spiraling black cloth (with a spider's-webbed pattern) marks the center, and in the middle of this I place a dozen velvety red roses in a vase, and a randomly tossed length of string (symbolizing the connecting thread—Ariadne's thread of divine connection—of us to each other, to endangered species, the earth, the cosmos). Two weeks before this day I experienced for myself the mask-making procedure, and so place the example of my own unembellished mask in the circle. [See figure 8 on following page.]

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111 *maṇḍala* ~ magic circle, 1859, from Sanskrit mandala "disc, circle" (*Etymonline*). "Sanskrit *maṇḍala* disc, circle, charmed circle (of a conjurer), mystical symbol in the shape of a circle. … A symbolic circular figure, usually with symmetrical divisions and figures of deities, etc., in the centre, used in Buddhism and other religions as a representation of the universe, and serving esp. as an object of meditation" (OED).

Figure 8 ~ Truth Mandala ~ A Feasting Table

Borrowing from the Truth Mandala of Joanna Macy, I place in each of four quadrants a thick, firm stick of wood, a pile of smooth stones gathered from the Atlantic shore, a pile of dried leaves, and an empty stoneware bowl that had been thrown by a friend.

Ghosts gesture toward endangerment.

At the edge of the circle, along with small unlined blank journals for each participant's elective note-taking, I randomly space twelve "ghost gestures" (so named by colleague and friend, Emily Miller)—watermarked images of fourteen endangered species I created for the purposes of this project. The process of creating these endangered species cards was consciously labor intensive and employed my hands, taking several hours to produce. I began by selecting photographic images sourced from the Internet[112]. I then

[112] I tried, when possible, to select from the public domain. See copyright page for permissions from photographers of other images.

worked with the images, in most cases, to isolate them from their background field, and further transformed them by gray-scaling, manipulating contrast, highlights and shadow. In some instances, I lightly modified the black and white images with pencil after printing. Each watermark is printed on Arches cotton paper, as I wanted the tactile nature of this particular paper[113]. (This process put extra strain on my printer, which I had to manually feed!) On the back of each, written in pencil, longhand, is information gleaned from several sources[114] about each creature: its habits and habitat, its contribution to its ecosystem, its conservation status, and existential threats. The æffect of both the watermark and the lightly smeared writing in pencil are, of course, to suggest the creature's (and our) vulnerability and impermanence.

In our introductory session, each subject chooses a creature—a companion-for-the-day—through a simple process. Each person picks up the image in front of where they have chosen to seat themselves. They have the option of either choosing to keep the image in front of them, or to pass it on to the next person—until each person has a "ghost gesture." In retrospect, I wish I had asked that the images make a complete round before subjects opted to adopt one. Interestingly, however, there were a number that never passed from their original position; in other words, it seems, perhaps, there were some people who, either consciously or subconsciously, placed themselves in front of a creature that resonated with them. I admit that sometimes, in the process of creating these endangered animal cards, particular subjects

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[113] I also experimented with printing these images on onion skin paper, which is powerfully effective in its delicacy—and, thus, metaphorically suitable. Ironically, perhaps, I determined that this thin paper was too insubstantial for our purposes.

[114] International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources: Red List; World Wildlife Fund; Conservation International; and others specific to specific animals: Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, Timber Wolf Information Network; Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, International Crane Foundation, and others.

came to mind in relationship to particular creatures, but I hadn't the expectation they necessarily would be matched during this process. Yet in several cases they were drawn to the creature I had imagined as their kindred spirit. I strike this up as yet another affirming synchronicity of the work.

Additionally, and relevant to participants' introductions, I had asked each member in the group to bring a small item to symbolize their life's work in the world: "Something representative of your deep-heart's-core in the work that you have done and continue to do." By way of formal opening and introduction, everyone shares something about their symbols and/or creatures, all which then remain physically and psychically present in our circle through the day.

Aural, ambient aesthetics: Songs of the endangered.

A final and important detail to note here as I set the stage for our research encounter is that I attempt to create an affective and aesthetic ambience—a crucial component of which is the electronic projection of natural soundscapes that serve as more-than-human presence throughout much of our process, and contributing to liminality. (Significantly, I also often listen to such as I write, as I do now.) I have sourced these rich and evocative "scores" from Wild Sanctuary[115] and YouTube. These soundscapes, or "biophonies" (Krause, 2012), are of forests and seas, meadows, stormy skies, whales and dolphins, birdsong, insect- and frog-song. The intention is the conjuring of an acoustic ecology evocative of extinctions—or

[115] "The Wild Sanctuary Audio Archive represents a vast and important collection of whole-habitat field recordings and precise metadata dating from the late 1960s. This unique bioacoustic resource contains marine and terrestrial soundscapes representing the voices of living organisms from larvae to large mammals and the numerous tropical, temperate and Arctic biomes from which they come. The catalog currently contains over 4,500 hours of wild soundscapes and in excess of 15,000 identified life forms. // Fully half of the natural soundscapes in this rare set are from habitats that no longer exist, are radically altered because of human endeavor, or have gone altogether silent." (Wild Sanctuary, n.d.)

rather, something of the earth's vital music we are losing as we proceed apace into the Eremozoic, or Age of Loneliness (Wilson, 2006, p. 91). Consider Krause (in Vidal, 2012), who writes in *The Great Animal Orchestra* (2012):

> A great silence is spreading over the natural world even as the sound of man is becoming deafening. Little by little the vast orchestra of life, the chorus of the natural world, is in the process of being quietened. There has been a massive decrease in the density and diversity of key vocal creatures, both large and small. The sense of desolation extends beyond mere silence. … If you listen to a damaged soundscape ... the community [of life] has been altered, and organisms have been destroyed, lost their habitat or been left to re-establish their places in the spectrum. As a result, some voices are gone entirely, while others aggressively compete to establish a new place in the increasingly disjointed chorus. (para. 6)

Introductions of Participants: Sharing Symbols and Creatures

I want to preface this section by acknowledging the challenges of navigating between the narrow shoals of revealing various relationships with my subjects—their relationships to one another, their disciplines, their paradigmatic and theoretical orientations—and protecting their anonymity. I am aware that simply withholding their proper names might not conceal their identities from all persons in all places. In my text their voices are carried by the names of their chosen *ghost gesture*, i.e., Elephant, Grey Wolf, Lady Slipper, etc. With this recognition, let me proceed cautiously to generally describe this extraordinary group of professors and human beings, all but one of whom are elders in their seventh or eighth decade of life. One is nearing his/her seventh. Following this description, you will meet each of them in turn, as they introduced themselves, by way of poetic transcription.

As noted in *Invitation to the Ritual Feast*, all participants are in various stages of a

retirement process (or *refirement!*) after many years of teaching and researching, primarily in higher education. Between them they have taught at numerous colleges and universities and conducted research in North American, Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. All, with various lengths of tenure, have found themselves at the end of their formal academic careers teaching undergraduate and/or graduate students at the same moderate-sized public university on the East coast of the United States—at a time of significant "structural adjustment" of universities generally, and their own institution specifically—the combined destructive forces of budgetary contraction and corporatization. Many have known and worked with one another for many years; others have barely met. In addition to being specialized, all are interdisciplinarians (an intentionally sought-after quality in my subjects)—and they span several disciplines including anthropology, art, development studies, education, history, literature, music, philosophy, psychology, psychotherapy, and theater. (I invited scientists—in particular, biologists—to participate, but to my disappointment, for scheduling reasons they had to decline. This is, in my mind, a significant absence and missing piece in this process, and, therefore, a weakness in my research.) Among them are critical theorists, feminists, political economists, postmodernists, phenomenologists, ethnographers, poets, eco- and depth psychologists, process philosophers, and theologians. All are parents; many are grandparents. Serendipitously, there are among them five males and five females. All have been strong prophetic witnesses, voices and actors for social and eco-justice throughout their careers.

I have known several of them in my role as student; some have been beloved professors from whom I've learned much and to whom I owe much. This familiarity with my participants was intentional, which, I believe in the case of this project, enhances the research, which includes expectations of mutual vulnerability.

Between the ten participants, some have had experience in art-making, others admit to their hesitancy at agreeing to the project *because* of the art-making component. One subject admits to not having attempted any "art" since drawing stick figures of the Lone Ranger in third grade. Without intending to paint anyone into simplistic, binaristic corners, I'll describe some as more "hearty," intuitive thinkers, accustomed to the *touchy-feely* (a contemptuous term I loathe, intended here sans the contempt; and for the record, not all were female); others lean more toward the "heady," highly rational, and, perhaps, skeptical of the *touchy-feely* (not necessarily male). One subject, at the end of the day, admits to having dreaded the event—so much so—that having anticipated it as more stressful than getting arrested for civil disobedience—s/he brought anti-anxiety meds, just in case. S/he was glad to report that the medication was, indeed, unnecessary, and that the process was "very, very interesting and liberating in a lot of ways."

Constructing Thresholds/Activating Liminality: Opening Space and Invoking *Orenda*

About ten o'clock, everyone gathers in a circle with mugs of tea or coffee, and takes seats in standard classroom chairs of molded hard plastic around the mandala, with twelve watermarked endangered species cards at its perimeter. One participant is in a wheelchair. (I'd have had them all in rocking chairs: after a childhood dream; after my experience in 1984 of deep dialogue in Nicaraguan living rooms; after the compelling participatory methodology of the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee, which includes circles of rocking chairs.[116]) This hermeneutic circle, of course, is the shape of democracy.

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[116] This may seem to some yet another frivolous detail. However, I would go as far as to recommend as serious a research agenda that includes the rocking chair in educational settings. A search for "rocking chair therapy" indicates that there is already serious research being conducted into the therapeutic effects of rocking chairs on various conditions, such as

Ambient sounds of the forest, prominently birdsong and whalesong, expand and enliven our space. I ask everyone to place their symbols in the circle, and formally open the morning session with a few words. I help set the tone with poetry, for instance, by Wendell Berry (2005):

The Millennium

What year
does the phoebe
think it is? (p. 8)

All

All bend
in one wind. (p. 9)

I also read a short passage from a book (Rheingold, 2000) I recently had discovered—one I stumbled across in my etymological wanderings. A particular word had caught my attention as I was preparing for this encounter, from the Huron language, *orenda:* "The power of voiced, focused will—the opposite of *kismet* or fate" (p. 60). *Orenda* recalls *poiesis,* as the capacity to respond and shape the world. This concept summons for me the kind of willful energy and participatory intention needed as we face into our age of extinction. I share its meaning with the group as an entrée to what I imagine could be a manifestation of shared *orenda* in our dialogue. As Rheingold explains:

> When the Huron Indians…use the word *orenda* (oar-END-uh), which literally means "song," they really are conjuring the concept of mystic influence of incantation, *the kind of power that mortals can summon to combat the blind forces of fate.* The English *prayer* doesn't convey its pride, and *spell* is too sinister. Among the Huron,

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ADHD, autism, dementia, stroke recovery, sensory integration, autonomic nervous system disorders, and more.

> one meaning of *orenda* is conveyed by the image of the cicada, composing its early morning song in order to make sure the day will be hot and the corn will ripen properly. … The use of the word … can mean hope, power, focused intention, and prayer to a higher power, without conveying either a sense of helpless passivity in the face of coldly deterministic fate or the overweening pride the Greeks called *hubris*… . (p. 60, italics in original)

Methodological Interlude: Exploring the Ecotonic Folds of Poetic Enquiry, A/r/tographic Practice, and Alchemical-Phenomenological Hermeneutic Process

By way of further anonymity (which I have assured my participants), and with a view to maintaining *orenda* as incantation, I employ poetic enquiry as a way of harvesting from the ensuing conversation. Let me further explain, as I briefly discuss *poetic enquiry* as another possible ecotonic perspective within a *hermeneutics of becoming*, a method I will engage for participant introductions and elsewhere in my data-pondering. As one of several arts-based or arts-informed methods of enquiry gaining legitimacy in the social sciences, simply put, poetic enquiry incorporates poetry as a component of a qualitative investigation (Prendergast, Leggo, & Sameshima, 2009, p. xxxv); a significant number of scholars have made use of poetry in their work, as well as reflected on and defended the conceptual underpinnings of this approach to arts-based enquiry (p. xxx). Poetic enquiry is also a legitimate hermeneutic strategy, as suggested by Slattery (2006), who says, "writing poetry is an excellent response to questions of hermeneutic interpretation" (p. 120); while Freeman (2011) speaks of hermeneutics "as a poetics of inquiry" rather than a "methodology for research" (p. 543.) As an experimentation with form, it is "as much (or more) about the process as the product" (Glesne, 2011, p. 246), and so is conceptually aligned with the philosophical framework for this project.

Prendergast et al. (2009), quoting Freeman (2001), suggest that from a philosophical hermeneutic perspective "[t]he challenge for interpretive researchers is incorporating in their understanding of a topic the physical, emotional, situational, and relational conditions within which communication and thus understanding occur (p. 646)" (p. xxxii). I find that arts-informed or arts-based approaches to research—including poetry and prose poetry—as methods of generating, analyzing and presenting data—can help facilitate an integration of these and other conditions, particularly doing so, as Prendergast (2009) suggests, in a direct and affective way (p. 545). Writing in different modes, such as in poetic form, can stretch researchers' thinking-feeling about data in new and distinctive ways (Glesne, 2011, p. 246).

Glesne, referencing both Richardson (2000) and Eisner (1997), notes that creative analytic practices (such as poetic enquiry) help "build a sense of empathy for research participants," and "generate insight and attention to complexity" (p. 245); they help access feelings and encourage broader perspectives (p. 246). That language as artistic tool helps a researcher access new ways of thinking and feeling is corroborated by Johnston (2008) who says, "metaphor, imageries, representations of subjectivities, and metacognitive *arts of knowing* … allow us to 'know' at the deepest level" (p. 323). I will add that these creative practices and use of language—while also requiring reasoned choices and critical analysis—tend to draw to awareness and encourage integration of intuitive and more-than-conscious knowing, and so, in this way, are related to an alchemical hermeneutic approach, whereby a researcher cultivates and recognizes the value of research data that emerges from the unconscious: the affective, the imaginal, dreams, archetypal symbolism, synchronicity, and soul[117]. All of these aspects richly feed an arts-based or arts-informed approach to enquiry,

[117] As noted earlier, I define "soul" not as "a substantial, underlying entity but the quality of existence that gives meaning and vitality to our experience" (Knill et al., p. 53). Soul is the

whereby "approach, process, and method all converge" and serve the "ethical demand to take into account the dynamic and complex unconscious factors in research" (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 199-200). Here, we lean into concepts from depth psychology, which, when applied to research, according to Elizabeth Nelson, increases "capacity to express, explain, and translate" and "is hermeneutic to the core" (p. 331).

I understand hermeneutic phenomenology as another research biome that interfaces with poetic enquiry. Addressing hermeneutic phenomenology in the form of literary expression, Friesen, Henriksson, and Saevi (2012) speak of the importance of poetic resonance of language and experience as intimate and co-emergent—with

> "…language having not merely a descriptive function, but one that is expressive, and "co-constitutive" of experience. ... Experience becomes what it is when it is put into language, particularly when this language has figurative, rhythmic, alliterative or related qualities that connect it with sounds, rhythms, and figures as they are (or can be) experienced. It…encourages aesthetically sensitized writing as both part of the research process and in the completed research product. (p. 3)

Additionally and importantly, poetic enquiry as an arts-informed approach to research helps "make sense and create meaning out of difficult and complex questions that cannot be answered in straightforward or linear tellings" (Springgay et al., 2005, p. 902). Such questions, as is my own experience, "permeate a life," involving all aspects of one's

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capacity within us to recognize, appreciate and cultivate awe, wonder, reverence, love, beauty, and meaning. Additionally, according to Levine (1992):

> The soul is characterized by depth rather than clarity. Clarity is a phenomenon of the surface, of sight. It requires light or, in this case, consciousness. But the soul is obscure to us, it is hidden, dark. … The soul is what is unknown, unconscious. It cannot be grasped through clear and distinct ideas. Instead, the soul communicates to us indirectly, through image and myth (p. 95).

becoming, including "emotional, intuitive, personal, spiritual, and embodied ways of knowing" (p. 902). As a cousin to hermeneutic phenomenology, whereby understanding ourselves and our world is constituted by way of experience, a/r/tography—an arts and education practice-based research methodology in its own right—arises directly from the lived-experience of enquiry (p. 902).

As a form of a/r/tographic practice that emerges from and lingers in the "liminal spaces between a(*artist*) and r(*researcher*) and t(*teacher*)"—poetic enquiry becomes rhizomatic, whereby the researcher and researched move and flow in dynamic momentum (Springgay et al., 2008, p. xx) in a process-relational interpretative and generative act. As nodes of a rhizome—or as strands between nodes—poems themselves may become or serve to create "interstitial spaces[s], open and vulnerable where meanings and understandings are interrogated and ruptured" (p. 902), involuted, transposed and expressed. As hermeneutic alchemist Romanyshyn (2007) says, "Poetry is born in the gap between the saying and what slips away" (p. 6). The "locus for transformations," says Grosz (2001) is to be found in these gaps—these spaces in-between—where becoming and openness to futures "disrupts dualisms"; the gap itself is "not merely a physical location or object but a process, a movement and displacement of meaning" (pp. 91-105, in Springgay et al., 2008, p. xx).

Approaching data with an artistic eye lets 'ordering and invention coincide' (Dillard 1982, 56)," writes Glesne (p. 255). In a form of poetic enquiry known as poetic transcription, a researcher, engaging such an eye, takes the direct words of interviewees (and in this way is similar to "found poetry"), and arranges the words, with an editor's prerogative of subtractions and minor additions, to fashion poem-like structures. The writer aims to

communicate the crux[118] of what is said, while also including rhythm of speech, and emotions revealed. As Glesne (2001) notes, poetic transcription, while involving word reduction, illuminates "the wholeness and interconnectedness of thoughts." Further:

> Through shaping the presentation of the words of an interviewee, the researcher creates a third voice that is neither the interviewee's nor the researcher's but a combination of both. The third voice disintegrates any appearance of separation between observer and observed. (p. 250)

Arts-informed or arts-based research practices are concerned with much more than their discipline and are thereby naturally conducive to transdisciplinary exploration, as Johnston (2008) also asserts when she writes that the arts are primarily concerned with "what they express *beyond* the disciplinary constraints of their form and structures" (p. 230); they are an exemplar of transdisciplinarity (p. 223). Additionally, I understand arts-informed/arts-based research practices such as poetic enquiry as inherently relational and process-oriented; together with its transdisciplinary possibilities, arts-informed/arts-based research naturally embodies and expresses the constellations of philosophical thought informing this study.

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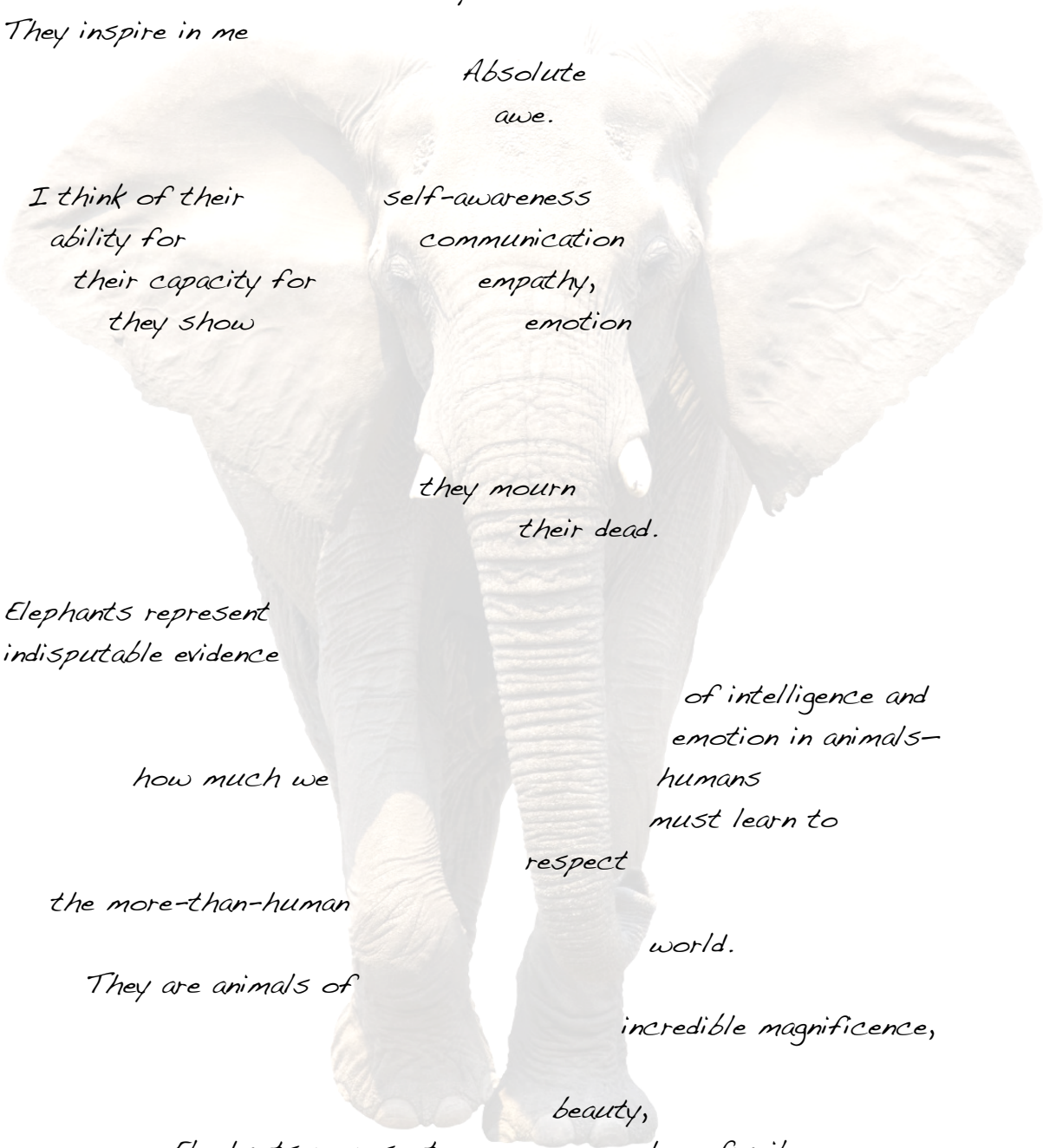
[118] crux ~ 1814, "cross," from Latin crux "cross" (see cross (n.)). Figurative use for "a central difficulty," is older, from 1718; perhaps from Latin crux *interpretum* "a point in a text that is impossible to interpret," in which the literal sense is something like "crossroads of interpreters." Extended sense of "central point" is from 1888.

Participant Introductions: The Poetry of Data, and the Data of Poetry

The following pages exemplify one researcher's process/product of poetic enquiry and poetic transcription, as both intuitively and consciously practiced in particular circumstances of space, time, and mood. Following is something of the process I followed. I first reproduced the ghost gestures—as selected by each participant—as watermarks on multiple pages. I then selected transcribed words of each subject's introductory remarks, arranging them on each page—guided by a combination of the words and their meanings themselves, my perceived nature of each participant and that of their creature, and the spaces on the page around and within the images of endangered creatures. The words and the images are meant to work in tandem to provoke feeling and meaning. I have selected one or two pages from this process to introduce each of my participants in the pages that follow. I wish for these words with images to speak for/introduce themselves, and so refrain from adding specific commentary. (You may find additional pages in Appendix G.)



Elephants are...

majestic,
intelligent,
sophisticated.

They inspire in me

Absolute
awe.

I think of their self-awareness
ability for communication
their capacity for empathy,
they show emotion

they mourn
their dead.

Elephants represent
indisputable evidence

of intelligence and
emotion in animals—
how much we humans
must learn to
respect
the more-than-human
world.

They are animals of
incredible magnificence,

beauty,

Elephants represent how fragile
beauty and magnificence are...

Elephants commodified-

our little amusements,
our ivory trinkets.

Whooping
Crane
was in front
of me
and stayed.

I brought two objects: One
is my battered old
bird book.
I am a lifelong bird watcher.
To me
birds symbolize everything
beautiful
delicate and elegant
in the world.

You know birds
are objects of divination
in most primary
cultures.

This is how I've spent
some of the most wonderful
portions of my life.

I am Grey Wolf

In front of me was Wolf.

I carry Wolf around with me
most all of the time.

In Navajo culture the wolf
refers to teacher
and teaching has been
a big part of my life.

And the power and the family
orientation. The tension
in our culture about wolves
and their power –

I follow these tensions at a distance
because following it too closely
is distressing to me.

But I do follow the laws,
the protections
– the endangered species act...
many have been taken away
from the wolf –
I follow
with
sadness.

They are amazing creatures–
Wolves offer so
much to our whole
living system.
I love their intelligence and their devotion to each other
and the complex society they create.

Wolf has been with me for a long time.
I'm thrilled to be Grey Wolf –

I am Tiger -

Tiger's eyes spoke to me.
The eyes grabbed
my attention.

Thinking about the tiger's
range, historically,
throughout Asia
destruction of habitat.

The is an incredibly powerful, beautiful
species
decreasing in range.

Another level that speaks to me -
the symbolic
notion of the tiger in art,
in literature,
in theater -

There's a short story
by Thomas Wolfe
to my hometown,
I've done a lot of research -
that brings this symbol
a place where
"The Child by a Tiger" -

about a lynching
in my hometown
of a black man.

That symbolic thread
ties together a lot
in my life.
The tiger is very

solitary,

yet social.

I'm in a process now of -

reinvention -
the next
life.

trying to figure out

thirty years of

My symbol
is a card with
a painting that
I made.
I always wanted

to be

an artist,

- but it's also

about the garden -

a painting
of Swiss chard
in my garden -

growing

a writing spider
in it.

I'm so glad you didn't pick up Turtle

I grew up
on the Atlantic,
Wild.

My dad
and I
would
offshore
fish
in the sixties
every weekend.

And we saw loggerhead
turtles
in the
ocean,
some of them with
barnacles
on their back.

We saw them
all the
time.

Several years ago
I sat
with a
nest.

And I saw
loggerheads
boil up –
about one hundred thirty
in a boil.

Awe!

I am Vulture.

So, I thought, This is cool,
I get to be a bird.

And I started reading
about my bird
and then Elephant came –
"Elephant, can you give me
my precious object there?"

(I left my symbol behind me –
on an island far, far away.)
[Laughter]

It's my precious object – it's a –
it seems to go well with –
what I learned about
my endangered bird.

I didn't realize this about a vulture, but –
[Laughter]

Did you know vultures
urinate
straight
down their legs –
[Laughter]

which has the effect of killing
bacteria accumulated from
walking through
carcasses?

[Laughter]. So I think –
Whale: "This is good to know.
Will it work for us too?"

[Laughter]

Moccasin Flower I am
Lady Slipper

I have to admit,
I didn't know what
I was choosing.

[Laughter]

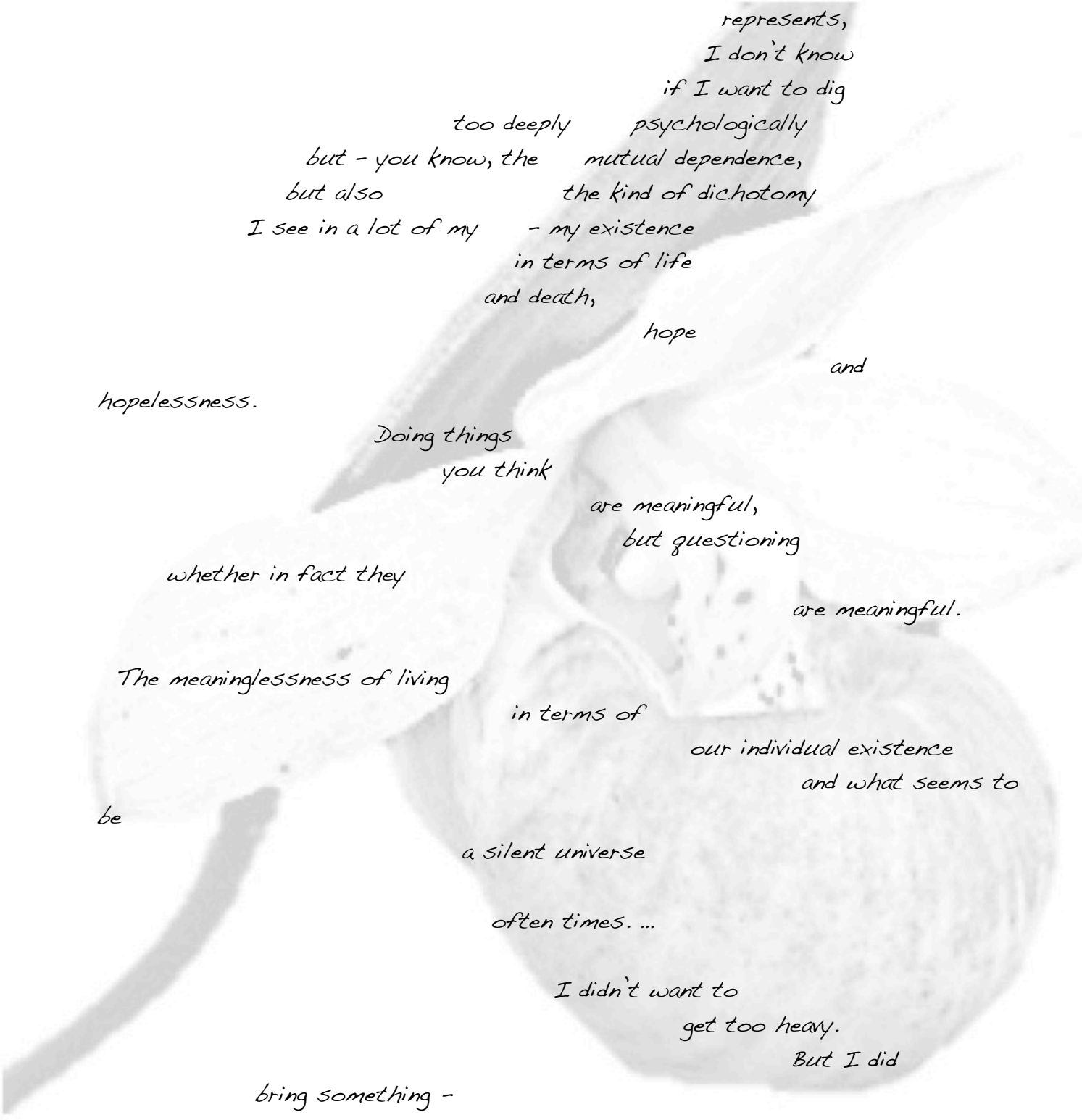
I obviously saw something here
that wasn't here, which seems to be the story of
my life.
Maybe see things in a different sort of way.

But what I saw here, which apparently is not
here,
was a flower of some kind.
I didn't know what kind. But I also saw
a whimsical creature on the flower
with some sort of wings.

I don't want to intellectualize about it -
because when we intellectualize
we remove ourselves
from what actually happened
when I saw this.

As I thought about it,
before I read about it,
it meant to me the kind of symbiosis -
of life, of creature
- animal-like-creature
almost a mythological kind, non-existent.
I couldn't identify what kind
of creature it was.

But it is there on the flower - some connection between -
the mutual dependence between different forms of life and so forth.



Lady Slipper 2

Maybe it
represents,
I don't know
if I want to dig
too deeply psychologically
but - you know, the mutual dependence,
but also the kind of dichotomy
I see in a lot of my - my existence
in terms of life
and death,
hope
and
hopelessness.
Doing things
you think
are meaningful,
but questioning
whether in fact they
are meaningful.
The meaninglessness of living
in terms of
our individual existence
and what seems to
be
a silent universe
often times. ...
I didn't want to
get too heavy.
But I did
bring something -
It's over here -
[Silence]

Whale 2

But I'm - I was thrilled that I -

that I chose this whale—

I've spent time by the oceans

and have seen whales.

Here's this planet

that we live on,

and most of it is water.

And because we don't live

in the water,

we tend to forget

the oceans

except for the

occasional visit.

But most of the planet is water

and most of life

is so foreign to us there.

And - and again, the intelligence

and complexity

of whale life~

the tragedy

of their slaughter and the

thoughtlessness of

the whole

damn thing.

I chose the whale or it, over all, chose me.

Monarch 2

I've always
felt
this coat

& the butterflies
represented an

awakening,

a necessity to be

global
in my feminism,

a feeling of

possibility,

along with
fear
and courage.

The fact that
I wore it
on this day
together

is of course
one of those magical
serendipities.

Nahuat

(Subject's given name for
peasant/indigenous hands)

I first want to talk about–
my Nahuat
I call it. My Nahuat
is not an animal,
but two clasped hands –
they are clasped, just so.
I see here both the peasants' hands
of people I've worked with
for years and years and years
in Central America.
And I see the hands
of some people that live
near me
out in the County.
Rural agrarian hands.
They know shit!

There's wisdom in the hands,
knowing in the hands, also threatened
by
extinction.

Just like for
the animals,

struggles in the countryside
right now – these hands

are threatened
by corporate land-grabbing
and mono-cropping of everything.
– the poisoning of everything is global and –
these hands are
among the first casualties.

I am a student of social revolution,
of agrarian struggles.
I saw these hands in Nicaragua
forming
Witness for Peace
'83
when our government
was throwing everything
it could at these peasants.

And you know I saw these hands.

There …

Masking and Unmasking: Profess/ors

These introductions, even though many already are familiar with one another, take more than the allotted time. I yield more time to the process. Everyone seems immediately eager to dive beneath surface introductions—to share meaningfully their symbols and thoughts about their species. They listen keenly to one another. This feels significant.

Unfortunately, missing here is something important that would have enhanced the process greatly—and time, once again, plays a part. I would like to have offered a minimum of fifteen to twenty minutes for everyone to reflect and write in their journals—about their animals, themselves, and each other in relationship—a few minutes before introductions commenced, and again afterwards to for reflections and integrations. I love to imagine the power this research could have, given more time—as well as different space, with access to natural settings. What if we had all had, say, three days….

Following the final introduction by Professor Nahuat, Katrina presents the simple materials and explains step-by-step the mask-making process in which we are about to embark—a process we calculate should take about thirty minutes for each person. The condensed version of instructions go something like this: 1) Put oil-based cream on face, especially around hairline; place a sheet of plastic wrap over face, with holes for nose (and mouth); 2) layer by a depth of three strips plaster gauze over protected face, smoothing and contouring as you go; 4) wait a few moments for hardening; 5) have subject loosen mask by smiling and wrinkling nose and forehead; 6) pop the mask off face. Katrina, Rosa and I rove, are on hand to assist; Lisa and Michael are witnesses to the whole process.

Images accompanying text on the following pages are digitally manipulated photographs from our day of encounter.

Subjects pair off and assist one another: Elephant with Crane, Grey Wolf with Tiger, Turtle with Vulture, Lady Slipper with Whale, and Monarch with Nahuat. I ask that everyone approach the process as mindfully as possible, and especially to honor silence, and in this way to honor one another. Folks, of course, have to speak to one another for informational purposes—but this mostly arises from careful attention to one another, and intention: *Are you able to breathe okay; how is your back; do you need a pillow here?* Everyone settles into a lovely, soft rhythm, and the honoring is palpable—even in the giggles and the occasional thinking-out-loud of the extroverted among us. The process is very much relational, and, of course, also embodied—even for the "headiest" amongst these intellectuals—intimate, requiring trust and a certain level of surrender. Surrender does not come easy for all, especially for a couple of folks who encounter some mild claustrophobia. One person chooses not to go through this part of the process (other than to assist a partner), and has instead brought a small deer pelvis with which to make a mask.

This particular art-making process—perhaps more than most—exploits the mind-body connection, which is intentional. Face, skin, hair, sweat, closed eyes, conscious breath,

pulse, fingertips, recumbent bodies are all intimately, sensuously involved—entwined and layered with—conscious and unconscious memory, emotion, and multispecies and multicultural relationship. Ultimately, I witness a reverence and tenderness in their work—along with a sense of playful *irreverence* and fun. One witness to the process confirms something of this in a notebook:

> There is a sense of trust in the room; I can feel the love in the room. People are carefully moving around, lovingly. One person lies down, still, hands across their chest, almost as it they are dead; yet it is not creepy, but peaceful. Their partner smooths the gauze on their face with a gentle touch. At first there was nervous chatter, giggling. Now it is quiet except for the sound of birds. We inhabit a sacred, liminal space only for an afternoon, yet, I believe, the memory will live on for the participants, this event will linger and inspire.

Embellishing Transformations: 1:15-2:45 p.m.

It is going to take some time for the masks to dry sufficiently before they can be embellished with paint and other materials; it is also time for an informal lunch break. The focused energy of mask-making dissipates between cleanup, bathroom breaks, and hummus wraps, more coffee and conversation. Ambient birdsong is interrupted by the roar of hairdryers as we speed up the drying process to ready the masks for the next stage of their becoming.

After this onset of modest chaos, Rosa helps to refocus the energy by introducing materials available for embellishing the masks. There are numerous colors of acrylic paint, glitter, pictures clipped from magazines, bobbles and bells, beads and stars, stamps, paper, foil, feathers, lichen, moss and more. Lisa sets in motion a slide show that Rosa has put together with examples of masks—some from other cultures, some made by students, many by children. These visuals suggest possibilities inherent in simplicity, ideas for borrowing and adaptation; they are presented with the intention of helping to defuse possible anxieties in those unpracticed in art-making.

Everyone finds a workspace around the perimeter of the room—many facing a panel of sun-illuminated windows. They begin transforming the still damp white plaster shells that reflect the contours of their own brows, nose bridges, cheekbones and chins. With the backdrop of our theme—

education in a of time of mass extinction—and the provocations/ evocations of endangered animal *ghost gestures*, participants have spent the morning introducing themselves by way of symbols of their work-in-the-world; they have, as well, *undergone and enacted* the embodied process of mask-making. Now they are to make color and texture choices, giving moods and expressions that will go into animating their masks and the stories they may tell. The group is in turn focused in silence and provoked by memories or thoughts that leak out into the collective space. I regret this part of our day was not recorded—other than by still photography, notes from my witnesses, and my own memory. This part of our day takes about an hour and a half; and again, I wish for a more extended session. Everything, to me, feels rushed.

Why Masks?

> [W]here masks represent the faces of spirits and ancestors, and primaeval events are re-enacted in mask-ceremonies to remind the living of their responsibilities, masks and the way they are used can be seen as simply a form of 'coming to terms with death'. Modern man [sic], conditioned by his religious past, tends to repress the hard facts of life, drawing a veil over them; but so-called primitive man accepts them, portrays them and acts them out. (Lommel, 1981, p. 218-219)

I hear an inevitable question: Why the choice for mask-making with my participants? As it turns out, in attempting to answer this question, I have come to better understand and appreciate the functions of masks and mask-making to my larger questions about love, death, and grief, and how both masks and rituals-involving-masks serve to phenomenologically, symbolically and psychically ally interesting strands, and point toward the possibility for educational transpositions in our critical time. In what began as an intuitive choice for mask-making, by following this line of flight—and touching down in anthropological and performance philosophy literature—I can confidently justify this choice of arts-informed method as serving multiple functions in the research, with relations to death, the body, animals/species; tragicomedy, clowns, tricksters, and the carnivalesque; and transformation and transpositions.

Mask-making is one of our oldest and most ubiquitous art forms and cultural expressions. According to Shapiro (in Eldredge, 1996), the mask can be traced as far back as the Upper Paleolithic Era, perhaps 50,000 years (p. 3). One of the earliest visual representations of a human figure donning a mask—known as the Sorcerer—is in southern France, and depicts a blended human-animal figure. Slightly varying opinions of this figure

(i.e., Mircea Eliade and John Pfeiffer) combine to conjure a human-stag-owl-wolf-goat-bear-horse-feline (p. 3). Gaston Bachelard, according to Eldredge, suggests that the mask is "a veritable instinct of the human race," which provokes Eldredge to question whether masks and activities associated with masking have been "somehow necessary for survival" (p. 3). It is not surprising to think of this instinct for survival as intimately related with death. Consider the story of the Dogon people of West Africa, who live along the River Niger, in whose creation myth the mask has a central role. Robin Morgan (1994) conveys the story as such:

> They say that once death did not exist. As people aged, they were transformed into snakes who spoke not with words, but through spirit language. At this time, the power of creation was kept in a skirt given by the god of spirits to the goddess of earth when they made love—and the skirt could be worn only by women. But some young men stole the skirt of creation from the women and were discovered escaping with it by an old man who had become a snake. So outraged was the old man/serpent by this sacrilegious act that he forgot to speak spirit language and screamed at them in words. At that moment, his soul left him, and only a corpse remained. No one had ever seen a corpse before, and no one could imagine where his soul had gone—until some time later, when a child was born who had snakeskin-like marks on its skin. Then the people knew that the old man's soul had entered the baby, and so to drive it out and give it peace, they invented a mask *decorated* as a snake. They sang, danced, and feasted—and the first funeral came into being. The old man's soul left the baby (whose skin turned a healthy brown again) and went to its peaceful rest in the mask. Thus, the Dogon say, because women's power was stolen and men now danced wearing skirts, death arrived in the world, and the first mask came into being. (p. 65)

Why did I not conduct a more straightforward and less time-intensive mask-making exercise, whereby they could have cut out paper masks, or embellished pre-formed cardboard generic faces? To reiterate, our mask-making process that involved the messy hands-on and tactile process emphasized and drew on the mind-body connection, as well as evoked a kind of "going-under" or mummification with multiple literal and symbolic layers of meaning in the process. I link here, too, the related word/idea of *invocation*—from the Western mystery, religious and magical traditions, the act of summoning a supernatural agent—which I interpret as calling on important sub- and unconscious knowings. Again, I think again of *orenda*.

Medical anthropologist, David Napier (1986) speaks of masks functioning to ground natural images in the senses; and he validates the importance of "the relationship of the senses to the phenomena of mask [-making and] wearing" (p. xviii). Masks conceal, change, and/or transform the "person" behind the image. Beneath the mask we are led to/allowed possibilities of multiple new perspectives both of ourselves and of our habitus; we put on "new" eyes with which to "see," and become. Employing masks for this project was, in part, an attempt to get customarily rational and "heady" intellectuals to contemplatively[108] draw from deeper embodied knowing (to think-with the temple/body); and to symbolically gesture towards death and transformation, both as a way through which to meditate on the phenomena of species extinctions, and to interrogate and enhance meaning in their own retirement process in the context of institutional and ecological decline and possible collapse.

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[108] Contemplate ~ from French contemple-r, < Latin contemplāre , originally deponent contemplārī , to survey, observe, behold, consider, contemplate, < con- + templum 'an open place for observation, **marked out by the augur** with his staff' (see temple n). > Temple: 1. An edifice or place regarded primarily as the **dwelling-place** or 'house' **of a deity or deities**; hence, an edifice devoted to divine worship. (OED). "But the temple he had spoken of was his **body**." (John 2:21)

Napier maintains that "masks are almost invariably related to transition" and are "a means for transgressing boundaries because [they provide] an avenue for selective personification in manipulating certain recognized paradoxes" (p. xviii and 17). Further, according to Napier, "Masks are, without a doubt, heresy to any sort of positivistic psychology, because they suggest a sensibility for multiplicity and saltatory[109] change" (p. 27), and so, I believe, are commensurate with nomadic subjectivity and transpositional becoming—or, as we might envision, "quantum leaps" of consciousness. "[M]asks appear," he says, "in conjunction with categorical change. They occur in connection with rites of passage.… [T]heir predominance during transitional periods attests to their appropriateness in the context of formal change" (p. xviii).

Its "appropriateness in the context of formal change" becomes one more unanticipated outcome of—and, retrospectively, strongly confirms my choice for—mask-making as method. This is partly also revealed in the strong connection of masks to a central generative theme that emerged around the concept of *the in/appropriate*, upon which I will elaborate in our Seventh Movement. Perhaps it is in going back to the roots of human art-making and cultural expression that we might find useful tools for reinventing the human at the species level.

Please see photographs of participants' masks, which follow.

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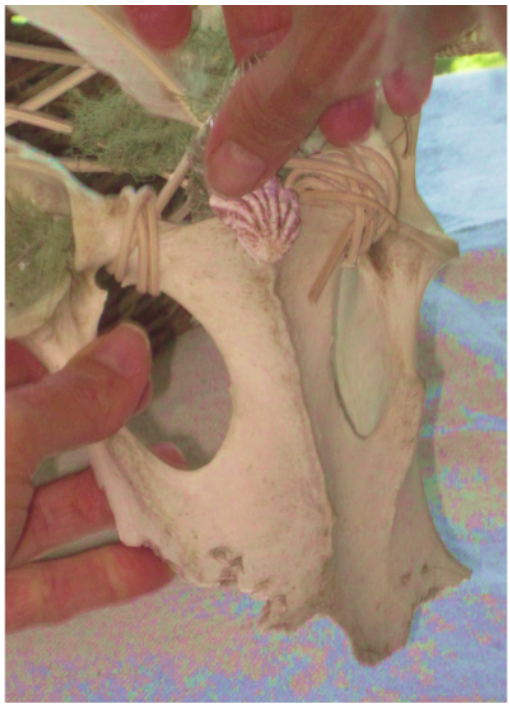
[109] **Saltatory** ~ from the Latin saltāt-, participial stem of saltāre **to dance**, frequent. of salīre to leap. … **Proceeding by abrupt movement**. … Nature hates calculators; her methods are saltatory and impulsive. // From Greeks to Darwin … Another highly characteristic feature of his theory was, that he [St. Hilaire] included in it what has recently been termed **'saltatory evolution', and strongly opposed Lamarck's fundamental principle that all transformation is extremely slow**.

Encountering Transpositions in the Liminal, Imaginal, and Alchemical: A Brief Nonlinear Telling[110]



As anticipated in our Fifth Movement, liminality both came to be a key condition for and outcome of our research encounter, as it is so, generally, of our time of mass extinction. To reiterate, on the macro level, we are living in threshold times—globally, in mid-transposition, with ecological and economic systems at multiple levels in decline and/or collapse/transition—in-between the rapidly waning Cenozoic planetary era, and an as yet-to-become next phase of Earth (and, therefore, human) activity. Relevant to this research, liminality is also conditional to the *poietic*, art-making process; to *amor mentoris*; to the experience of encounter and genuine dialogue; and to our ecotonic methodology—a hermeneutics of becoming. Following from this, I believe, liminality is a quality and condition to be better understood, developed, and ethically applied in educational spaces, especially in a time of mass extinction. Hermes, our metaphorical guide, is god of the gap, the in-between, the crossroads, the threshold.

As also previously discussed, in conceiving and conjuring this research encounter, I nomadically and processually roamed across and borrowed broadly from several theories and

[110] As a preface to this concluding section of Movement Six, please remember that our journey is a nonlinear one. And so, here, we are going to consider a small portion of data that emerges from and after our dialogue, which is yet to be introduced, to be further and more thoroughly considered in Movement Seven.

practices[111], blending, for instance, the fields of expressive arts and art-based research, dialogic theory, as well as Joanna Macy's methodology called *the Work that Reconnects*. Integrating elements from these fields, I hoped, would be æffective as a kind of alchemical stew to nourish transpositional research. As researcher, in the case of our encounter, I performed the role of "ritual master/conductor" or "alchemist," intentionally cultivating a research atmosphere of imaginal and liminal space—for the benefit of the hermeneutic circle, with our mask-making and dialogic processes as central "ritual" components. We can think of the hermeneutic circle itself as liminal and imaginal space. Conducting the research encounter in this way—creating ritual-like patterns—emerged from—and has resulted in further—contemplation of the process-relational character of poiesis and ritual[112] as they exemplify a processual cosmology, for instance, as articulated by Whitehead, particularly his vital concept of concrescence[113].

While maintaining that the imaginal is nurtured by the liminal, I want to return to the idea, as articulated by Romanyshyn (2007), that the *imaginal* differentiates "a region of reality that is intermediate between sense and intellect and that mediates between them" (p. 81). This intermediate, imaginal space is where I imagine David Bohm's (2003) "*stream of meaning* flowing among and through us and between us" (p. 302); or "way between voice and presence where information flows" (p. 109), as put by 13th century poet, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's (in Rūmī & Banks, 1995). This *intermediate space*—this *way between voice and presence*—is fundamental to centered, genuine dialogue, which we will further consider in our Seventh Movement.

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111 The ecotone is liminal space.

112 ... *poiesis* as theorized by Levine (1997) and Knill et al (2005), and ritual by van Gennep (1909) and Turner (1969/2009)…

113 Concrescence is "the process of self-creation as successive acts of unification" (Beardslee, 1979, p. 36).

I am also reminded here of the mysterious intermediate zone of liminality and imaginality known metaphorically as the "crossing point" of a lemniscate (Richards, 1996, p. 97)—that is, as expressed in plant geometry, a layer, sometimes just one cell thick, of mattering-potential from whence a plant directs its creative energies—through its integrated constituent parts—upward shoots toward the sunlight, and downward roots into dark earth. The archetypal "crossing point" is a place of revelatory imagination, and contains "the fusion of opposites" such as "subject/object, inner/outer, dream/reality, sleeping/waking, death/life"—a continuum expressed by wholeness, containing what we often think of as distinct opposites, which "breathes by their means" (Richards, 1996, p. 97). The shape of this continuum is the lemniscate (from the Latin *lemniscatus,* hanging ribbon), the shape of the symbol that denotes infinity, or the Möbius band.[114] Metaphorically/symbolically/actually, these in-between spaces are crucible-like—places for the work of alchemy, from whence creativity springs and where transpositions can happen.[115]

Briefly staying with M. C. Richards (1996) to consider the metaphor/archetype of alchemy, while thinking of our poietic and dialogic encounter as performative ritual and transpositional research (something like "alchemical theatre"), let's consider her interpretation of French dramatist and poet Antonin Artaud (1896-1948). In her commentary on Artaud's extended essay, *The Theatre and its Double* (1938), which she translated into English (1958), Richards explains Artaud's "alchemical theatre" as a modality of/for social transformation:

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[114] Also, interestingly from a metaphorical point of view, the lemniscate, according to Deborah Haynes (2012), is the symbol used by St. Thomas Aquinas "to describe the circular movement of angels" (p. 14).

[115] Haynes (2012) writes of the lemniscate as "a metaphor for the qualities that characterize a fine leader, and inviolable center from which one's energy manifests both toward the self, and outward toward the world" (p. 15).

> [W]here events [encounters] move materials, as in alchemy, into new conjunctions, as the alchemists of old used lead or red earth or dung as a starting point for transformation. This thinking is not literal but uses symbols for primary materials, and these materials undergo changes according to the arts of the alchemists. So Artaud's purpose…was important social renewal…. (p. 36)

While the process-relational methods employed for our research encounter surely need more experimentation, practice and scrutiny (a project in which I am keen to continue, especially—or necessarily—collaboratively), in light of this "alchemical" process, I believe educational and research encounters that employ poietic means, by way of expressive arts, have the potential to provoke transpositions of consciousness. Such transpositions of consciousness are essential to the reinvention the human at the species level—toward *homo integrans*—if we've any hope of transitioning to an Ecozoic era.

Liminal spaces yield silence, play and transpositions; silence and play as liminal, transpositional spaces.

Turning again briefly and directly to our encounter, we find participant statements that suggest the significance of these alchemical processes involving liminality and the imaginal for becoming and transposition. Numerous poignant moments ebb and flow through our encounter. Reflective silence and shared laughter—with varying qualities along a spectrum of somber to silly to subversive—punctuate our art-making, playful jesting, and dialogue. Moments of silence are especially æffective. Having encouraged participants to try to be with and "be okay with" silence, this group embraces it. Intensities of feeling are often palpable to

me in the silence itself. Prompted by an invitation to silence, toward the end of the day, participants volunteer how this is a particularly meaningful aspect of the process. Consider, for instance, this moment, as directly transcribed:

Professor Butterfly: *I like the emphasis on silence as a part of dialogue, which we so often cannot have, cannot accept. In the year that I was conducting research in Finland, I learned right away that silences were quite different there in conversations, in classrooms, in dialogue, than in this [the U. S.]. People did not insist on filling up the silences. I had to quickly learn that. It's an art—not filling up the silences.*

[Silence]

Professor Lady Slipper: *Exactly. That's what the feather in my mask's mouth is about.*

Professor Sea Turtle: *My mask doesn't even have a mouth.*

[Laughter]

Professor Tiger: *Me neither.*

Professor Lady Slipper: *Too much talking. That's the wrong way of saying it. Not enough appreciation of silence.*

[Silence]

Professor Tiger: *So how has this experience of silence, and also of touching, touching each other, of creating something totally different from each person, but with a banter going on—with peaks and valleys and rises and falls*

and quietness, how does that weave us together? Why does that happen, so that we are a different group of people now than we were at the beginning of this project?

[Silence]

Professor Nahuat: *I see all of you as children again.*
Professor Lady Slipper: *Do you see yourself that way?*
Professor Nahuat: *I don't know about me, but I'd like to be a child again.*
Professor Lady Slipper: *Though I can't remember where I read it, I've always remembered this. I read once that the definition of an adult is an arrested child.*

[Laughter]

[Silence]

Professor Nahuat: *There's a lot of truth in that.*

I am especially interested in Professor Tiger's notable comment/question, which describes and holds wonder about one "creature's" experience/perception of collective transposition—*Why does that happen, so that we are a different group of people now than we were at the beginning of this project?*—and how it suggests that transpositional change is grounded in embodied experiences of silence, touching, play, creating, community, and weaving together. I am encouraged by Professor Tiger's insights, as they suggest to me the

great potential our process holds for educating in a time of mass extinction.

This small taste of dialogue from our encounter points us now to Movement Seven, where we shall continue to harvest data-gifts, and where, as promised, we will hermeneutically consider the generative theme of the in/appropriate, as initiated by Professor Vulture.

Seventh Movement

Becoming-In/appropriate as Transpositional Leadership:

Vultures, Clowns, Rogues and Fools

> [Comedy] comes out of a deeper, darker side. Maybe it comes from anger, because I'm outraged by cruel absurdities, the hypocrisy that exists everywhere, even within yourself, where it's hardest to see. I use comedy to find a way through. (Robin Williams, 2014, August 12, para. 6).
>
> Must the revolutionary artist […or teacher or leader…] ignore — even flout — the basic laws of decency that govern our world in order to transform that world? (Iyer, 2014, October 24, para. 1)

As alluded to in prior movements, a major generative theme that emerges from the dialogue among our participants is that of "the in/appropriate"[127]. Since, I have come to think of *the in/appropriate* as a method for activating transpositions, or transpositional creativity. Coincidently[128], I begin this contemplation of in/appropriateness in the wake of the death of actor and comedian, Robin Williams. William's tragicomic genius—which compelled and deeply touched so many—was channel for both our cultural distress and creative possibility; it resided alongside a mad impulse towards the in/appropriate, including, tragically, by way

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127 Remember, that one use of the typographical oblique is the generation of ambiguity in a word—so here we are obliged to hold as question, what constitutes the appropriate or inappropriate.

128 In light of the themes I aim to develop, this coincidence takes on the significance of yet another synchronicity—that is, meaningful coincidence. Synchronicities have been plentiful along our research journey, which I take as a kind of confirmation of the work.

of his own suicide. In William's death, the world lost and mourns a beloved sacred clown and critical court jester.

And so I follow from this new node—a flow, a line of flight—toward the *in/appropriate*—which surfaces prominently in dialogue among/between endangered, un/masked profess/ors—through their stories and communal pondering, which spring from an utterance (shared, whispered, screamed)—*education in a time of mass extinction*—as well as from their art-making/mask-making. The theme of *in/appropriateness* strikes a resonant chord with this "focus group" and weaves throughout the dialogue—eliciting playful yet serious (seriously playful) jesting, laughter, memories of activism, and connections to research—as well as somber reflections on discouragement, privilege, compliance, and/or retreat. We will touch on these themes in the unfolding text, while primarily circling around the in/appropriate as our principal theme. This line of flight toward/with the in/appropriate has since taken multiple entwined trajectories within my own thinking, especially by way of etymological associations. It has also led me to consider the significance of the radical imagination—primed, in part, by the expressive arts process—to deep education[129], and to the formation of courageous, prophetic and transpositional leadership in a time of mass extinction.

The Radical Imagination

Surprised as I am by this turn in my enquiry—moving from, with and through grief—I have begun to reflect upon the possibilities of *becoming-in/appropriate* as manifested through the radical imagination—that is, imagination understood not as an individual

[129] "Deep Education … encourages the evolution of our relationship with our animated and reactive planet from one of objectification, alienated consumption, and, at worst, destructive exploitation to that of a loving, responsible conversation in the ongoing human-nonhuman dialogue" (Chalquist, 2014, para. 1).

possession, but a collective process (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014, p. 4). This turn toward *becoming-in/appropriate*—arising from the enquiry process itself—as well as my own grief in a time of mass extinction—is generative, affirmative, cathartic, and transpositional. I give credit to a participant in my research encounter—Professor Vulture—who specifically evoked it, and to other participants, who confirmed, extended, and celebrated it. In short order, I will introduce you to Professors' particular insights, and to my hermeneutic amplifications of those insights.

But before we delve into the in/appropriate, let us pause briefly to give voice to two important reflections on: 1) the radical imagination, which gives rise to and nurtures *becoming-in/appropriate* (and the *in/appropriateness* of this research); and 2) a basic ethic that, critically, needs to be articulated clearly as the ground for the radical imagination and *becoming-in/appropriate*.

In explaining what I mean by the radical imagination, I borrow from the work of Max Haiven and Alex Khasnabish (2014), who understand the radical imagination as a collaborative process, not merely a "conscious creative force of the individual mind" (p. 4). (As I understand it, the radical imagination, if applied to educational leadership, would exclude the possibility recognizing an individual leader or—as it calls for and is characterized by a kind of distributed leadership.) Metaphorically speaking, the radical imagination is "that tectonic, protean substance of which all social institutions and identities are made…which…is constantly in motion under the surface of society, undermining and challenging [and re-creating] all that we take to be real, hard, fast and eternal" (p. 6). This substance, they say—"like magma, that volcanic substance between liquid and solid" (p. 6)—erodes the foundations of the seemingly stable, and when they inevitably give way, the

newly imagined arises out of the ruins. Nicolas Bourriaud (2009) says that for an emergent, new culture to become, rather than conforming to constant standardization, "it will have to develop a specific imagination, relying on a logic unlike that which presides over capitalist globalization" (p. 17)—a logic that homogenizes, commodifies, and monetizes everything (including love and life); that dangerously exalts the false notion of the independent, self-made individual; and that is unsustainably extractive, exploitative, and grossly unequal. I believe Haiven and Khasnabish (2014) help us envision the kind of imagination that is needed to reconstitute the world in "the age of austerity" (as they put it in the title of their 2014 book); and, for our considerations, in a time of mass extinction, for it shall certainly take the radically imagined to *reinvent the human at the species level*.

Generally speaking, the radical imagination is crucial as "an intimate part of how we empathize with others" (human and more-than-human), as well as "the way we gain some sense of the forces that impact our lives, and the way we project ourselves into the future and gain inspiration and direction from the past" (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014, p. 4); it "is real and important and we ignore and belittle it at our peril" (p. 3). Haiven and Khasnabish describe (as Whitehead might, with language of propositions, lures for feeling, prehensions, satisfactions and concrescences; or as Macy might, with Deep Time) the radical imagination as "not just about dreaming of different futures. It's about bringing those possibilities back from the future to work on the present, to inspire action and new forms of solidarity today" (p. 3). The radical imagination is also about learning from the past, "telling different stories about how the world came to be the way it is, remembering the power and importance of yesterday's struggles, and honouring the way they live on in the present" (p. 3). Wendell

Berry (2012a) often poetically expresses this sense of Deep Time, as intimately connected to the land:

> … What we owe the future
>
> is not a new start, for we can only begin
>
> with what has happened. We owe the future
>
> the past, the long knowledge
>
> that is the potency of time to come. … (p. 184)

We might think similarly of *active hope* as Braidotti (2009) does of *affirmative politics*, which, she says, "rests on a time-continuum that indexes the present on the possibility of thinking sustainable futures" (p. 45). While we also must bring the past into the present for the benefit of the future, as Berry, Macy, and Whitehead contend, we must also involve the radical imagination for the sustainability of these futures, which consist in our "being able to mobilise, actualise and deploy cognitive, affective and collective forces which had not so far been activated" (p. 45).

An example, as prehensively involved in our encounter, might look something like the following. The elder profess/ors who comprise our participant pool—many who taught and/or mentored me—contribute via an active and reflective process of poiesis and dialogue to the shared, radical imagination that is, in turn, becoming this work—the cultivation of a kind of imaginary landscape of ideas, attitudes, and practices. The idea of *becoming-in/appropriate* germinates in the radical imagination that is our research encounter. *Becoming-in/appropriate* then becomes a method or tool of the radical imagination. And, "without the radical imagination," say Haiven and Khasnabish, "we are lost" (p. 4).

It occurs to me that *hope* itself, in these times, needs to be similarly conceptualized as process-relational. We might think of *active hope* (Macy & Johnstone, 2012) as the process of bringing radically imagined futures, where descendants thrive in the Ecozoic, to seed and inspire the present—with/towards new forms of living and loving, leading and educating. It includes appreciating the creativity, ingenuity, imagination, and will—as well as mistakes—that our ancestors (at times radically) manifested in order to navigate obstacles to life in eras past.

> [Ethics is] the practice that cultivates affirmative modes of relation, active forces and values. The ethical good is that which acts as empowering modes of becoming. (Braidotti, 2009, p. 46)

The Affirmative Ethics of Becoming-In/Appropriate

Before we further develop the theme of in/appropriateness—we need to pause in order to think through and articulate a basic ethic for the ground for *becoming-in/appropriate,* assuring that our intentions are not merely casual, cavalier or reckless. As we enter more deeply the terrain of *becoming-in/appropriate,* which conceivably involves *becoming-dis/obedient*, questions arise, especially as the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris has just occurred (January 2015)—whereby twelve people, several of them in/appropriate (or inappropriate?) cartoonists, were murdered by indefensibly inappropriate fundamentalists/ extremists. Complex questions and competing narratives are upon us, and so we need to qualify this *becoming-in/appropriate* with a few provisos—some of which take the form of questions.

Mostly, I want to emphasis that *becoming-in/appropriate*, as I imagine it, is firmly hitched to an affirmative ethics of Love, empathy, respect for Others, beauty, joy, kindness,

and non-violence—as it serves and surfaces from the radically imagined. This involves the birth of new ideas and ways of living; and new communities of engagement and the renewal of established ones; and as one approach to transposing intractable institutions. Grounding *becoming-in/appropriate* in such an affirmative ethic, however, does not come with a guarantee that everyone will be happy with the in/appropriate, nor free of offense—especially as it is necessary to challenge unequal and illegitimate power, and habits and conventions that have become a threat to planetary life—and to human and more-than-human communities. Braidotti (2009) helps us with a definition of what she refers to as "affirmative ethics," placing it in the context of limitations to human freedom—which we can think of as the antithesis of the ideology of individualism.

> An adequate ethical relation is capable of sustaining the subject in his or her quest for more inter-relations with others, i.e., more 'Life', motion, change and transformation. … It affirms life as difference-at-work and as sustainable transformations. An ethical relation must confront the question of how much freedom of action we can endure. Affirmative ethics assumes that humanity does not stem out of freedom, but rather that freedom is extracted out of awareness of our multiple limitations. Affirmation is about freedom from the burden of negativity, through the understanding of these limitations. (p. 55)

While they are fresh in my thinking/feeling, let me share a few questions that arose in these last days, which have lead to this qualification. What distinguishes the in/appropriate nature of satire, the carnivalesque and civil disobedience, for instance, from sensationalism, or tactical shock and awe, unhinged from ethical consideration? How do we navigate questions of "rights" when they become contradictory, and conflated with power and

privilege—when they become tools of division, oppression and destruction? What does it mean when "freedom of speech" is not free, but comes with a price tag, i.e., is monetized? How do we understand and negotiate "individual [human] freedoms" when the collective survival of humanity and more-than-humanity is at stake? These are some of the questions that haunt me, as we consider becoming-in/appropriate in a time of mass extinction.

At the outset, given my primary focus on love and grief for this project, it is ironic and certainly surprising that I have been led to think and write about the redemptive and transpositional possibilities of the in/appropriate, as embodied in clowns and carnival, tricksters and fools, play and laughter and the comedic spirit. Entering the conceptual environment of the in/appropriate, which at first or on the surface might appear contrary or at a disjuncture to my initial line of enquiry into death and grief, also makes me think of the martial artist—for instance, as s/he deflects a potentially lethal blow while simultaneously harnessing the blow's force for her own advantage—modulating the energy of the blow's force not just defensively, but in creative, productive ways. We might think of this as an Aikido moment of our research—a transpositional surprise—or a "qualitative leap through and across pain [that] is the gesture that actualises affirmative ways of becoming. …a gesture that constructs hope as a collective social project" (Braidotti, 2009, p. 53).

For when all is said and done—having moved through the often stark topography of this existential exercise—hovering in both new and familiar thresholds—pausing for and sometimes becoming mired in the inexorable conditions of depression, anxiety, fear, and doubt—all which accompany gazing into the abyss of extinction—my desired aim is to arrive at a gap-in-the-work (called "the end") transposed—in other words, deeply educated, and

with a sense of *potentia*[130] (Braidotti, 2006) to share with others. Perhaps, under the dire circumstances now facing (or denied by) humans, our need for both the ironic and sheer astonishment is clearly evident. As Mary Oliver (2008) advises: *"*Instructions for living a life*: Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it"* (p. 37).

It is *telling about it* that continues to be my task; so below I shall try to weave these seemingly disparate threads into a comprehensible if loose fabric for consideration, beginning with an *Extinction Report*, through which we consider the endangered vulture (*Cathartidae*[131]*,* New World; and *Accipitridae*[132]*,* Old World). For, it was the puckish Professor Vulture who, in the course of our dialogue, and early in our encounter, in/appropriately provoked the theme of *becoming-in/appropriate.*

Extinction Report: Learning to Love and Grieve Vultures and "Others" Disregarded

> *And I drifted away from them, slow… // reluctant, looking back … calling them what I'd never called them, what they are, // those dwarfed transfiguring angels … who pray over the leaf-graves of the anonymous lost, // with mercy enough to consume us all and give us wings.* (Bottoms, 1987, p. 40)
>
> Between death and life (there is sometimes a vulture). (Van Dooren, 2011)

Conservation biologist and founder of the Society for Conservation Biology, Michael Soulé (2007) speaks in an interview by Robyn Williams (not the actor, Robin) of the vital

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130 From *potēns*, present active participle of *possum* ("I am able").

131 *Cathartes* is the Greek word for "purifier," referring to these vultures' role as "cleansers" that "tidy up" decomposing corpses in nature. See: ***Catharsis (from the Greek κάθαρσις katharsis meaning "purification" or "cleansing")—the purification and purgation of emotions—especially pity and fear—through art or any extreme change in emotion that results in renewal and restoration.*** It is a metaphor originally used by Aristotle in the *Poetics* to describe the ***effects of tragedy on the spectator.***

132 *Accipitridae* is a taxonomic family within the order *Accipitriformes* — birds of prey. From Latin *accipiter* ("hawk"). *Probably from accipiō* ***("take, seize")***.

connection between love and conservation: “It's a question of love. … It all boils down to what we love and we save what we love and if we don't love it, we're going to allow it to disappear and go extinct.” Quite apparently, we have not loved near enough or well enough.

According to the *Living Planet Report* (McLellan, Iyengar, Jeffries, & Oerlemans 2014)—the world's leading, science-based analysis of our planet’s health and impact of human activity—the state of the world’s biodiversity appears worse than ever. The report’s Living Planet Index (LPI) reveals that of more than ten thousand representative populations of various species—from mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian and fish kingdoms—*have declined by 52% since 1970*. In other words, “in less than two human generations, population sizes of vertebrate species have dropped by half” (p. 4). The worst decline—a shocking 76% over four decades to 2010—was among populations of freshwater species (p. 9). “These are the living forms that constitute the fabric of the ecosystems which sustain life on Earth. … We ignore their decline at our peril,” says Marco Lambertini, Director General WWF International, in the foreword to the report’s summary (p. 4). Released at the end of October, just on the heels of the LPI, was the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change *Fifth Assessment Report of Climate Change* (IPCC, 2014), which warns in a synthesis for policymakers: “…even with adaptation, warming by the end of the 21st century will lead to high, to very high risk of severe, widespread, and irreversible impacts globally *(high confidence)*” (p. 13, italics in original). The issues of climate disruption and species extinction are, of course, intimately entwined.

So many questions… First, are we shocked—or, more worrisome, not shocked—or perhaps rather numb? Do we simply consider as normal this stunning news, par for the course of “progress”? How does one—how do we—respond to such a magnitude of loss?

Moreover, I wonder, in the context of this project: Are we teaching—our children, our students, each other—Love—the subject of love, the methodology of love, the poiesis and practice of love? Are we leading from Love?

Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren (2011) draw inspiration for their own work on love and extinctions from Soulé, who, they say, despairs over whether we can "love enough to save enough." They further challenge us to consider the fate of "unloved others"—which we can, of course, also easily apply to human others in our midst:

> What of the unloved others, the ones who are disregarded, or who may be lost through negligence? What of the disliked and actively vilified others, those who may be specifically targeted for death? Then, too, what of those whose lives become objects of control in the name of conservation, and those whose lives are caught in the cross-hairs of conflicting human desires? (para. 1)

An example of such an unloved and disregarded other (whom van Dooren has studied extensively) is the vulture—particularly in the West, where the term "vulture" tends to have inauspicious[133] associations, for instance, with fearful notions of death and decay. While in some areas of the world vultures are associated with loving, bonding, mothering, protection and community (New World Encyclopedia, 2007, para. 4), in the West we tend to encode the vulture metaphor with "rapacity, sinister appetite, and sly, scavenging greed" (Steuter & Wills, 2008, p. 111)—which comes from and adds to human ignorance and persecution of them. To a culture fearful of and in denial about death, vultures make us uneasy; they stir our collectively repressed fear and inscrutable death-shadow. Perhaps our "intent on mastering

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[133] *auspicious* (adj.) 1590s, "of good omen" (implied in auspiciously), **from Latin auspicium "divination by observing the flight of birds,"** from auspex (genitive auspicis) + -ous. Related: Auspiciously; auspiciousness. *Au* is short for *avis,* Latin for bird.

death" (Becker, 1973) and the violence that permeates our ironic "pro-life" culture-of-death are linked, so that we are paralyzed by the existential predicament we have caused ourselves. This predicament prevents us from æffectively transposing our ways of life, including especially institutions, that are paradigmatically founded on separation and alienation (from nature and each other); meanwhile, we consume—devour—*bios*—that is, life as politicized and cultural. We "[do] not think about death and [do] not care to bother about it—but this is a purely intellectual, verbal admission. The affect of fear [of death] is repressed," says Zilboorg (p. 467), as quoted by Becker (1973, p. 17)—which is, in turn, projected as further alienation and violence, which then moves us toward extinction.

Vultures dismember and disembowel, they pull and tear at bodies, at flesh, spill entrails and expose sinew, pick clean the bones. They signal death by locating the dead with keen precision. When they communally huddle—stereotypically in barren trees—we see them as *a wake of vultures.* They are watchful, patient, efficient—and though we may be repulsed by their habits of feasting at carrion banquets, we unconsciously know we need them. *How many of us know, in a conscious way, just how much we rely on these consumers of the dead—let alone death itself?* In a human-world deluded into thinking we are disconnected from nature and natural cycles, we wish for death to be unmessy, clean, sterile, which we think vultures are not.

We sometimes think of them as merely caricatures—clown-like—with their bald, colorful heads, wobbly wattles, and dark-feathered, gangly and hunched (or soaring) bodies. Easily lampooned, out of misunderstanding and apprehension, we'd rather mock them as caricatures rather than contemplate their serious function. In the case of vultures, their lampooning easily and unfortunately becomes disdain and disgust, whereby vultures

metaphorically come to symbolize voracity and avarice, for instance, in the realm of politics and economics, as in "vulture funds," "vulture capitalism," and "K Street vultures" (referring to lobbyists in Washington). Critics of neoliberalism sometimes refer to "education reformers"—those especially wealthy private investors who wield disproportionate influence in policy matters (i.e., Gates, Broads, and Waltons)—as "vulture philanthropists."

Figure 9 ~ Vulture Capitalists
(© Mike Konopacki, reprinted with permission)

Without a doubt, ideologies and practices that result in the destruction (privatization) of public education and other public assets, need to be named and challenged, but can we do it without vilifying an inculpable, endangered species—or without degrading the metaphorical possibilities for which they ought stand?

> *I saw for the first time*
> *[the vulture's] soft countenance, the raw fleshy jowls*
> *wrinkled and generous, like the faces of the very old*
> *who have grown to empathize with everything.* (Bottoms, 1987, p. 40)

Actually, the vulture, as affirmed by Ogada, Keesing, and Virani (2011), occupies a vital ecological niche, fostering "the flow of energy through food webs," and, as such, provides extensive ecological, economic, and cultural services (p. 1). For instance, in their

scavenging role, vultures help protect the health of soil, water, other wildlife, domestic animals, and humans from disease. It is even thus that vultures' digestive systems uniquely contain special acids that will dissolve anthrax, botulism, salmonella, and cholera bacteria (van Dooren, 2011, p. 48). Vultures are "key constituents of multispecies communities" (p. 9) that have long taken care of the dead—recycling flesh, playing a necessary role in resurrecting life from the once living—both human and more than human. In North America, Turkey Vultures were well loved by and inspirational to the continent's first peoples, according to Swick (2013), who reports that the Cherokee nation called them "Peace Eagles" because they do not kill the living. They also tended to show up in numbers on the battlefield, when peace treaties were being negotiated.

Several crucial species of vulture are now themselves on the brink of oblivion. Scavenging birds, especially vultures, are the most endangered group of birds globally (Ogada et al., p. 11); just in the past two decades, there have been alarming, historic declines in many vulture species worldwide. Of the twenty-three vulture species in the world, thirteen are listed as threatened with extinction (IUNC, 2013). They face a variety of existential threats in many of their various habitats. The range of threats include poisoning and toxic bioaccumulation (both intentional and inadvertent, and sometimes in large numbers, as they feed communally[134]) (Ogada et al., p. 6); lead poisoning from ingestion of shot or lead-based bullet fragments in carrion (kills by hunters), which, like many other toxins to which vultures succumb, causes slow, painful death (p. 7); electrocution and collision with power lines, wind turbines, and vehicles (p. 7); habitat loss and degradation, and food shortage (p. 8); and persecution by humans due to "ignorance, superstition, wantonness, and retaliation" (p. 7).

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[134] According to the IUCN Red List (2013, August 15), up to 600 vultures recently died after feeding on an elephant carcass poisoned by poachers.

Van Dooren (2010) provides an exquisite meditation on the nature and fate of the vulture. With vivid description and compassion, van Dooren illustrates the "pain of individuals whose deaths constitute species extinction" and issues "a demand for responsibility"; his writing brings into focus ways in which attention to individuals vultures as "ethical subjects"—who suffer slow, horrible deaths—is requisite for genuine and adequate care for species (p. 272). Speaking specifically of critically endangered South Asian vultures, he says on the same page:

> It will take two days for him to die. The food that he has just eaten has poisoned him. His kidneys will fail. … Suffering from lethargy and depression, his neck will begin to droop in the manner characteristic of the sick and weak members of his kind. Eventually, dead or near to death, he will fall from his perch to the ground.

Figure 10 ~ Sad Clown (Photo credit to Stephen Winsor, Creative Commons)

Figure 11 ~ King Vulture (Emmanuel Keller, reprinted with permission)

...you would cry pure as a bird,

when the season lifts him, the ascending one, almost forgetting

that he is a suffering creature, and not just a solitary heart

flung into brightness… Rilke, *The Seventh Duino Elegy*

Unloved Others.

In examining the "intimate entanglements of life and death in…multispecies communities," van Dooren challenges us to think about the ways in which the human is systemically implicated, as both perpetrator and victim. Revealing the many likely devastating implications of the loss of vultures, he expands "the complex and shifting category of the 'unloved' … to include the lives of some humans—alongside vultures and myriad others—as beings that are necessarily caught up in the escalating death of species in our time" (Rose & van Dooren, 2011, para. 5).

This conjures for me the ways in which we fail to apply the logic of the "ethical subject" within our human—and educational—communities as well. Through the cold calculus of neoliberalism, certain disregarded populations are rendered "surplus" (i.e., "non-

productive" and exploitable objects), and therefore expendable, subject to "disposability" (Giroux, 2014) and "eliminationist death" (Blacker, 2013), causing immeasurable suffering and loss. Homelessness, mental illness, violence, incarcerations, and violated bodies, included in morgues and cemeteries, proliferate. This shameful and tragic loss of human potential and creativity ripples through and is magnified as a broken and dis-eased society. By so many measures, ours can be understood at this historical juncture as a failing, even doomed society. This failure includes (and is, in part, because of) our educational institutions—that render so many to the margins—like rubbish to the verge. The same declining system promotes and materially rewards most those who impose ideologies of exclusion, domination and extraction. (And yes, many of us, especially those of privilege in the Global North, are implicated in this to one degree or another.) Historians Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway (2014) have imagined what the world might look like if we fail to make necessary transformations. In their work of "cli fi," or climate science fiction[135] entitled *The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future*, they describe an imagined future historian's conclusions:

> …that a second Dark Age had fallen on Western civilization, in which denial and self-deception, rooted in an ideological fixation on "free" markets, disabled the world's powerful nations in the face of tragedy. Moreover, the scientists who best understood the problem were hamstrung by their own cultural practices, which demanded an excessively stringent standard for accepting claims of any kind—even those involving imminent threats. (Oreskes & Conway, 2014, p. ix-x)

[135] *Climate fiction* is a relatively new literary genre consisting of novels or films about climate disruption and global warming issues.

> [There is a] relational and transformative quality of dialogue [which] underscores the ethical practice of research and evaluation both in terms of the research process as a beneficial…learning experience and in terms of the research process as one that may instigate change…. (Costantino, 2008, p. 213)

Methodology Interlude: Dialogue via Buber, Bakhtin, and Bohm for a Hermeneutics of Becoming

"Positioned ethically in a world of becoming, which is to say in attention to others and to responsibilities," says Deborah Bird Rose (2013), "one must necessarily be both situated and available to the call of others"—perhaps especially *unloved others*. "Another term for this situated availability is dialogue" (p. 7).

As was pointed towards in our Sixth Movement, dialogue—in a general and generative sense—is central to our research encounter/s. It is conceptually designed for this enquiry as a collective meditation, a collaborative contemplation, involving *logos, mythos and poiesis*—idealized as a creative weaving of love and grief, anger, fear, courage, etc.—with thoughts and ideas, dreams and inspiration, art, memory, and story—as a way toward Berry's (1999) call for "critical reflection, within the community of life-systems, in a time-developmental context, by means of story and shared dream experience" (p. 159). I think of *logos* in terms of both critical reflection and reasoned discourse, as well as, symbolically, the creative animating principle of the Cosmos. I think of *mythos* as the imaginal, symbolic language of art and poetry, stories, dreams and visions—also immanent as a creative principle in language and communication. *Poiesis*, then, borrowing from Knill et al. (2005), is "understood in the traditional sense as the capacity to respond and shape the world" (p.

10)—"the act of responding to what is given, imagining its possibilities and reshaping it in accordance with what is emerging. …not the expression of a pre-existing reality. (p. 71)

Dialogue—"an ethical practice and way of being" (Costantino, 2008, p. 212)—is etymologically derived from the Greek *dialogos,* meaning "speech across, between, through two or more people" (Banathy & Jenlink, 2005, p. 5). It is a form of collective communication, evoking relationship and process, to include respectful and compassionate listening, and as I am conceiving it, silences. It signifies a "flow of meaning" out of which emerges new understandings (p. 5). And so, dialogue conceptually flows from the philosophical spaces within which we seek to work. According to Banathy and Jenlink (2005), dialogue

> …suggests community, mutuality, and authenticity—an egalitarian relationship … [and] provides a meeting ground, *communitas,* and manifests…in a variety of spontaneous and ritual modes of discourse in which nature and structure meet…. Dialogue may be transformative or generative in nature, as well as strategic. (p. 4-5)

Central theorists of dialogical hermeneutics are Martin Buber (1958/1923; Friedman, 1996), and Mikhail Bakhtin (1981; Todorov, 1984). We can consider dialogical hermeneutics a "hermeneutic biome" theoretically contributing to a *hermeneutics of becoming*—and helpful in conceptualizing encounters. Both Buber's and Bakhtin's theories are consonant with the dialogic attitude I aim to cultivate. Buber held that genuine dialogue is essential for creating and sustaining community, and that endeavoring to engage the 'I-Thou' perspective during dialogue "enables people to achieve a meaningful connection, allowing them to both change the other and be changed by the dialogue" (Holman, Devane, & Cady, 2007, p. 112). Also according to Holman et al., the theory of 'dialogism' of Bakhtin underscores the power

of discourse to heighten understanding of and reveal multiple perspectives and possibilities—what Bakhtin called *heteroglossia.* "Bakhtin held that relationships and connections exist among all living beings, and that dialogue creates a new understanding of a situation that demands change" (p. 112). Slattery (2006) also draws from Buber's relational/dialogical ethos and Bakhtin's heteroglossia to make the case that a postmodern philosophical hermeneutics—and so perhaps a hermeneutics of becoming—validates

> text interpretation that arises from the dialogue of individuals working within the context of a community circle where the Other, whether human [or more-than-human] person, tradition, or artifact, is experienced as a "Thou" and not an "It" (p. 137).

These and other perspectives on dialogue confirmed my intuitive drift to a hermeneutically oriented methodology. I was excited to gradually discover by way of some of the literature, the affiliations of dialogical hermeneutics with process-relational philosophy. Palmer (2001) says, "To exist hermeneutically … is to participate in the endless chain of [listening and] interpretation that makes up the history of apprehending being" (para. 9). With a nuanced adjustment, we can reshape Palmer's statement with process language, for instance: To exist hermeneutically is to participate in the endless chain of creativity and prehension of actual occasions that make up the history and future of becoming. "Interpretation," Kepnes (1992) tells us, "…runs back to the interpreters and interpretations of the past and stretches toward interpretations of the future" (p. 70). "Bakhtin conceives of a 'great time' of infinite and unfinalized dialogue in which no meaning dies. 'I hear voices in everything,' Bakhtin exclaims, 'and dialogic relations among them'" (Friedman, 2005, p. 37). (I love the thought of immanent voices—revealed in dialogue.) I want to quote Bakhtin

(in Kepnes, 1992) at length here, which, to my mind, beautifully illustrates the process-relational act of a *hermeneutics of becoming*, to which dialogue, in this sense, contributes:

> There is no first or last discourse, and the dialogical context knows no limits (it disappears into an unlimited past and in our unlimited future. Even past meanings…can never be stable (completed once and for all, finished), they will always change (renew themselves) in the course of the dialogue's subsequent development, and yet to come. At every moment of the dialogue, there are immense and unlimited masses of forgotten meanings, but in some subsequent moments, as dialogue moves forward, they will return to memory and live in a renewed form (in a new context). Nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will celebrate its new birth. [This is] the problem of the *great temporality.* (Bakhtin quoted in Todovov, p. 110, quoted in Kepnes, 1992, p. 70, italics in original)

This last line, translated alternatively (in Friedman, 2005, p. 37), says "nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 169 f., in Friedman, 2005, p. 37) (I like that: *homecoming festival*.)

In addition to Buber and Bakhtin, I also turn to theoretical physicist, David Bohm, a more recent contributor to theories of dialogue, who, in his formulations, drew from this knowledge of quantum physics and relativity theory. This method is sometimes referred to as Bohmian dialogue.[136] Conceived as "a form of learning through a nonjudgmental open exchange of ideas," says Costantino (2008), Bohm emphasized equity and open-mindedness, and collaborative relationships among researcher–participants (p. 212). According to Holman

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[136] In *A Hidden Wholeness* (2004), educator/activist/author Parker Palmer promotes "Circles of Trust" to engage in a dialogic process very similar to Bohm's. Palmer also draws from the discernment process of the Quaker tradition.

et al. (2007), Bohm hypothesized that the knowledge of an individual, based on partial experience and assumptions, is insufficient for addressing questions, and that only through dialogue—thereby gaining an understanding of many different parts of an issue—can one begin to see a more complete picture (p. 112). Bohmian dialogue is to be practiced "without facilitation or fixed topics," and emphasizes "deep inquiry, suspended assumptions, and collective intelligence" (p. 113).

Bohm (1994, 1996, 2003), like Bateson (1972, 1979), understood the nature of thought and mind as a system, from which, he theorized, dialogue was a creative and process-relational exploration and expression, "a stream of meaning flowing among and through two or more" (p. 302). This "ecology of mind" is also the sphere where the radical imagination, a collective process, is constituted, as Haiven and Khasnabish (2014) propose, "through shared experiences, languages, stories, ideas, art, and theory" (p. 4). Continuing:

> We create, with those around us, multiple, overlapping, contradictory, and coexistent imaginary landscapes, horizons of common possibility and shared understanding. These shared landscapes are shaped by and also shape the imaginations and the actions of those individuals who participate in them." (p. 4)

Return to Encounter, through Dialogue, and into Horizons of Common Possibility

As our Sixth Movement described, we have spent our morning revealing ourselves via introductions that have taken us beyond names and titles to symbolically significant aspects of our lives and work, and have "undertaken" an intimate, and (to some) vulnerable, process of mask-making. During this portion of our encounter, I summon the group back to into circle—and into dialogue. Each person places his or her mask in the mandala, alongside the ghost gestures.

Intentionally, I refrain from posing many pointed questions, as I am interested in witnessing what emerges as rhizomatic conversation and co-created lines of flight from the liminal space and contemplative mood conjured by communal *poiesis* and shared silence. I judge this group as generally having had long practice in the basic Buberian dialogic ethic—I sense with ease the mutual respect among these colleagues. They are well used to reflective and critical consideration of multiple perspectives and possibilities. I begin the session by providing a sketch of Bohmian dialogue, while also providing the proviso that, while borrowing from his ethos and practice, we've not sufficient time to settle into the fullness of dialogue this method ultimately requires and deserves. In this way it is a mere adaption—and a wandering into experimental territory. I also shared a poem fragment by Jalāl ad-Dīn Rumi (13th century mystic and poet)—through time, a distant anticipation of Bohm's insight.

Bohm draws an important distinction between dialogue and discussion, and turns to etymologies to illustrate this fundamental point. He contrasts a view of *dialogue* as process-relational, with *discussion*[137], which is etymologically kin to *concussion* and *percussion*[138]—and about breaking things apart, and that can result in damage (Bohm, 1996, p. 6; 2003, p.

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[137] discussion ~ mid-14 … in classical Latin, "a shaking," from *discussus*, past participle of *discutere* "**strike asunder**, **break up**," from dis- "apart" (see dis-) + *quatere* "**to shake**" (see quash). Meaning "a **talking over**, debating" in English first recorded mid-15c. Sense evolution in Latin appears to have been from "**smash apart**" to "scatter, disperse," then in post-classical times (via the mental process involved) to "investigate, examine," then to "debate."

[138] percussion ~ early 15c., "a **striking, a blow**; internal injury, contusion," from Latin *percussionem* (nominative *percussio*) "a beating, striking; a beat as a measure of time," noun of action from past participle stem of *percutere* "to strike hard, beat, smite; strike through and through," from per- "through" (see per) + quatere "to strike, shake" (see quash). And, **concussion** (n.) c.1400, from Latin concussionem (nominative concussio) "a shaking," noun of action from past participle stem of concutere "**shake violently**," from com- "together" (see com-) + quatere "to shake" (see quash).

302). I read the following from Bohm (2003) to the circle of participants:

> I give a meaning to the word 'dialogue' that is somewhat different from what is commonly used. The derivations of words often help to suggest a deeper meaning. 'Dialogue' comes from the Greek word *dialogos*. *Logos* means 'the word', or in our case we would think of the 'meaning of the word', and *dia* means 'through' — it does not mean 'two'. A dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself, if the spirit of the dialogue is present. The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a *stream of meaning* flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group, out of which may emerge some new understanding. It's something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It's something creative. It's something about the meaning of life…about what you really think is important. (p. 302)

Rumi (2004/13th century) similarly speaks in a poem to this process: "There is a way between voice and presence where information flows" (p. 32)—which in turn is perhaps like M. C. Richards' (1996) "flow of sap"—that is, "dialogue between questioning and responding"—"an archetypal resource in our being" (p. 80).

I hope to conjure an atmosphere and attitude that is "a sacred space—[for] awe and reverence and attentive listening … with our bodies open to respond from their midmost point" (Richards, p. 80). I note to the group:

> So, obviously this is not something that can be forced, and it is also a process that ideally merits and needs a longer stretch of time. But I'm curious if and how we might experience this kind of dialogue today—in the spirit of emergent meaning

flowing between us—and if so, how I might identify and interpret this meaning in light of my question concerning education in a time of mass extinction.

After readings from Bohm and Rumi—while encouraging everyone to trust the presence of silence—whenever it arises and for however long (a challenge also to myself!)—I pose a single, broad-stroke question to set the process in motion:

What is the question or questions that now arise out of my deepest feeling?

[Silence…]

Our Masks Slowly Reveal Themselves

From here, Professors' voices unfold in selected text as transcribed. Many different themes are suggested that deserve closer scrutiny, but space and time require discernment and choice. And so our emphasis stays with what led us to and became the most generative theme to emerge—*becoming-in/appropriate*. Other subthemes arise that we will also consider (privilege, compliance/retreat, and, then, through an associative process, proprioception), which, by way of alchemy and hermeneutic consideration, amplify the significance of the in/appropriate. We begin with the dialogue as it first unfolds, and where we can already begin to detect patterns that become our subthemes. I will mostly withhold commentary until *the in/appropriate* fully arises, after which we will loop back to consider the ways various motifs, in ensemble, resonate to support our leading theme of the in/appropriate.

We begin…at the beginning...with the matter of *privilege*, which Professor Lady Slipper[139] bares from the silence after several moments. Professor's words follow as poetically transcribed—in a form, as previously considered, is particularly suited for drawing out the poignancy and tenderness of participants' thoughts.

Professor Lady Slipper:

My question is,
What does all of this mean
within the context
of suffering in the world?

---

[139] I have debated whether to call this professor after the more commonly used name for this endangered wild orchid—*Cypripedium acaule—Lady Slipper*—or the name it is said to be called by indigenous people of the region, *Moccasin Flower*. I have opted to use *Lady Slipper*, because I believe it better conjures useful irony, as it connotes class and gender categories that may for affect be juxtaposed with words and stories uttered by the professor, who adopted the flower as her/his endangered creature for the day.

Is it meaningful,
is it important,
is it a luxury
that privileged people have
to engage in?
Or is it important?

That's a question.
Not a statement.

Another **silence** ensues, and I can feel/see that the participants are really taking this in. There is a reverent quality to the silence and, in turn, to their listening.

Next to arise is **Professor Nahuat**'s important question/concern regarding whether our exploration/discovery through expressive arts either draws out as affirmatively æffective—or results in taming (and therefore perhaps assuaging?)—the energies of our deepest feelings and impulses from/toward the world. In retrospect, this seems especially important in light of the subsequent appeal for—and perhaps even points toward—becoming-in/appropriate.

I'm wondering
how we tame
all the wild stuff
that comes out from within—
through dreams
and deeper feelings
that we might express today in these masks.

Does this express or does it tame?
I'm just wondering.
It's a question too,
I have no idea.

Am I taming it or what?
The stuff coming out
from the deepest sense of both

elation and gratitude for being alive—

and the deepest bitter feelings
of death,
of abandonment,
of injustice,
all those things that seem
to have motivated me,

I'm more aware
of the stuff coming out from within me
but I don't know what it all means
now that I'm doing it,
It means something
but I don't know what it means.

And what does it mean if I tame it?

[Silence]

Like Professors Lady Slipper and Nahuat, **Professor Elephant** "answers" our opening question about his/her deepest feeling with another question: *How are we to live in this time?* Further, s/he seems to indicate that the poietic process can lead toward a kind of presence necessary for clarity and intimacy to honestly navigate, engage with, and create from the chaos and pain of the world. These qualities of presence and play are perhaps key prerequisites for æffective transpositions.

My question arises
again and again:
How am I—how are we—
to live in this time?

For me,
this is a moment
in the midst
of the chaos
and pain
of the world.

*A moment of **being***
fully present
***to intimacy**,*
*to **getting lost**—*

*making masks and **play**ful creating.*

Unfortunately, most of my life
is not lived this way.
I wonder
how to bring
full presence
and openness
to daily life
[including in the classroom.]

[Silence]

We can detect a certain tension arising in/from the dialogue, even as we begin, as is revealed, in a respectful manner, in the fragments above. This tension manifests in questions, and draws our attention to a paradox (rather than conflict, as I see it), involving privilege, power, presence, and play. As I understand it, this paradox reflects different approaches—scholarly attitudes and responses—to suffering, violence, pain, injustice—and so too, perhaps, to mass extinction. These tensions are also easily detectable broadly in the academy via differing methodological paradigms—say, simplistically, between qualitative and quantitative—or theoretical and practical—approaches to assessment and research—and the numerous contrary philosophical and political underpinnings of curriculum and pedagogy. Think, for instance, especially in these times, of the uneasy coexistence of the humanities and science/technology; or psychology or spirituality and political economy; art, beauty/aesthetics, and "hard" facts/critical analysis. In what might have devolved into polarized and paralyzed philosophical and/or political positions, these undercurrents of

tension—by way of our alchemical, relational, arts-informed process—become, instead of conflict, paradox. In turn, this paradox gives birth to, gives way to, and is addressed by the trickster energy of Professor Vulture, whose insights and responses eventually lead us to this third way that we shall frame as and name, as previously suggested, *becoming-in/appropriate*. This *third* creative way—between/involving (expressive) arts and critical analysis of power—transposes what otherwise might be oppositional and unproductive approaches to our problems—offering new possibilities for *radically imagined* ways to frame, understand, respond, and educate in a time of mass extinction.

As we proceed sun-wise around the circle, let's now turn to **Professor Vulture**. Professor Vulture follows from Professor Sea Turtle, who has just bemoaned his/her and others' tendencies toward compliance with/under "authority," and/or depressive retreat from dysfunctional and declining educational institutions. Professor Vulture sets the stage for the in/appropriate, first by playfully mocking the destructive institutional obsession with efficiency. In the process, he recognizes and names the potential for *in/efficiencies* of art and play to serve as transpositional means to affirmative ends.

> *What really comes up for me,*
> *I feel a kind of pride,*
> *an ultimate subversion*
> *because, I'm thinking,*
> *this is really* ***inefficient.***
>
> *[Laughs]*
>
> *I've a sense of time…*
> *just spent playing.*
>
> *In these times*
> *when there's so much focus*
> *on efficiency —*

It's really great to
***subvert** that call for efficiency—*
instead,
*to **inefficiently play.***

It feels like an intelligent thing to do.
It pulls me out of this greyness,
the business of pessimism and optimism;
even beyond that—

I still know how to play!

[Laughter]

And I'm digging it and I'm thinking,

[Silence]

What pulls me into such a sense of not allowing myself
to play in my day-to-day business, even to have…

Who knows? …

I feel like I've kind of bought into the system
in order to be efficient,
and art is not efficient!

Look at this stuff!
You've got to pull it together,
and it's expensive,
it's messy,
it takes a lot of time.

Why would you even think about such a thing?

Introducing Professor Vulture, an *Appalachian Heyókȟa*

That it is Professor Vulture who surfaces this word—*in/appropriate*—somehow feels, well, *appropriate*. Professor Vulture has a reputation as a dream-worker, and also as a Holy Fool, a Sacred Clown; actually, s/he was first introduced to me as a *heyókȟa* (among the Lakota people, a contrarian, jester, or sacred clown.) It was this professor's playful antics and insights during our research encounter—as well as others' affirmative responses to them—which led me to the Extinction Report on vultures, and this meditation on becoming-in/appropriate.

As s/he is introducing her/himself to the group, among the factual details about vultures (gleaned from the back of her/his card) s/he chooses to share: "Did you know vultures pee straight down their legs – which has the effect of killing bacteria accumulated from walking through carcasses?" Laughter ensues, and Professor Whale responds: "This is good to know. Will it work for us too?"

Even apart from an imagined Vulture persona during our session, I associate this beloved professor, the Appalachian *heyókȟa,* with a gentle fierceness, with jokes and play and laughter (in all seriousness), spontaneity and improvisation, with healthy disruption, disquiet and challenging engagement. S/he excels at decentering[140]. S/he is edgy, yet easy-going; provocative and compassionate. S/he embodies the trickster—"ancestor to all clowns, fools, rogues and comic heroes" (Hyers, 1996, p. 175)—and in so doing, often deviates from "normal" procedures and conventional behaviour. Professor Vulture's is a pedagogy of the conundrum, puzzle, koan. While it is abundantly clear s/he is no stranger to the tragic and

[140] In expressive arts theory, decentering is a method of problem-solving that works by drawing attention away from a "problem" by engaging in art-making that is not bogged down in/by the semantic details of the problem.

cruel, or to the æffects of depression, her/his teaching is infused with wit and irony that often delivers profound lessons. You might never quite know where s/he stands or where s/he is heading. But you always arrive—and arrive again. S/he is the King's Fool, the Court Jester. "Nothing that is so, is so" (Feste the fool, in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night, Or What You Will*, 4.1.1959).

Clowns, Fools and Carnival…

Masks Begin to Speak

As facilitator, up until this point, I have tried my best to be comfortable with silences, and to let the dialogue emerge—and therefore hold back from giving directives—or even speaking. It is a practice of trust in the process, and also an act of judgment. At a certain lull in the conversation, though, I take the opportunity to explain the purpose and function of the mandala at our circle's center, as adapted from Joanna Macy's *Work that Reconnects,* in the form of the Truth Mandala (see Fourth Movement, p. 153). Until now, I have withheld commentary about the significance our centerpiece, as I want the mandala to function at the imaginal level, as a multilayered archetypal/symbolic presence. While conscious of constraints of time, I act on a hunch that by providing more specifics regarding the inspiration for and structure and symbolism of the mandala at this point, I might encourage a new dimension to the dialogue, nudging more of us into the movement, memory, sensation and feeling of the bodyheartmind—both as individuals, and also as expression of/for the collective. (We will see that—I believe, because of time, and perhaps my own doubt—this has its limited æffect.)

I'll take this moment to draw our attention to the center of our circle, our mandala….

Macy maintains that part of the real challenge and imperative for us is to be able—to

allow ourselves—to really feel what is happening in the world, not just on an intellectual level but to embody the grief and anger, and the fear and emptiness or loneliness in and of our precarious world. These and other feelings are represented in each of the four quadrant of the mandala. So, this circle is divided into four quadrants and each of the quadrants represents feelings. ...

I suggest that everyone consider which quadrant/s their mask occupies, and that they should feel free to move them within the mandala, as they wish, and some of them do. Professor Vulture moves her/his mask from the "fear" quadrant to the "emptiness" one.

Following on the heels of a story as told by Professor Tiger, which includes his/her Grandfather, a Klansman, Professor Vulture reflects on/through his/her mask—allowing, in a sense, the mask to speak for itself. Professor Tiger's memories of the Klan provoke a further memory/story, told by **Professor Vulture**, which launches us into in/appropriate territory….

Vulture on the verge and the power of the inappropriate: Mooning the Klan.

One of the things
I'm kind of beginning to dig–
with whatever this mask is implying–
one of the things I really like
is that s/he seems really inappropriate!

We were talking about
the Ku Klux Klan–
which reminds me
of a story I just love
about Molly Ivins–
going down to the courthouse
in Austin, Texas to petition
so the Klan could march.
And everybody got so upset with her,

But she went with the Klan anyway
to support their right to march.

And then, Molly
had a thousand people
at the march–all
with their pants
pulled down–
Mooning the Klan
as they marched.

So I think this guy right here–
would do that. He would Moon
the Klan with Molly.

And – and I'm thinking, you know–
We keep talking about
Mr. P. and our legislature…

and I'm thinking –
We just need to moon them!

Silence has been tried,
all kinds of street theater
has been tried.
Humor has been tried,

but we need more—
something that goes…

over the edge.

Something that becomes
really inappropriate.

I think you'd be the perfect one
to be in charge of that, Vulture.

I think this – this alternate ego in this face –
might – might really get into that.

Humor seems to be the most powerful
– one of the most powerful ways –
especially when it gets to that edge
and becomes inappropriate.

I'll pay your bail!

When there's talk of testing Gen Ed and Art
I think then, it's time for the inappropriate.
How could we confront that—
so that it's just totally inappropriate?
I want us to think about
the power of the inappropriate.

Professor Vulture hits a nerve.

The group loves this, laughter ensues, and stories with examples of becoming-in/appropriate from participants' experience and/or research are called upon. After prompting, Professor Lady Slipper recounts the time s/he attended a meeting to discuss campus-wide assessment policies, where s/he engaged the in/appropriate to dissent from the procedures being implemented. Professor Tiger exclaims to Lady Slipper: "You could wear your A for Assessment!"; and **Professor Lady Slipper** responds:

> *Yes, I could wear my A.*
> *I went to an Arts and Science Council meeting,*
> *and I wore a scarlet letter on my chest.*
> *We were discussing assessment.*
> *Wearing my scarlet A, I gave a talk, and*
> *I challenged [assessment policies].*
> *Every chair there agreed with me.*
>
> *Of course….*
>
> *But in end the dean said, well,*
> *you know we have to do this, don't you.*

At a pause, **Professor Sea Turtle** returns us to the problem of compliance. And compliance is indeed a problem—especially in a time of mass extinction—when humans (in the case of education, i.e., faculty and administrators, but even staff and students) knowingly ignore and/or surrender their own best/moral judgments, and take paths of least resistance (perhaps out of fear of losing privilege/s?). Such forfeitures of principle are also failures of will and imagination, which have the unintended consequences of perpetuating injustices and unsustainable practices, and stymying potential creative alternative solutions to our problems.

> *A hundred, a million faculty can say no,*
> *but there's compliance.*
> *There's so much compliance right now*
> *with what's going on.*

Professor Lady Slipper continues…

We have to abide
by all the guidelines –
their rules –
and so forth, but you're
totally distorting what education – I mean,
I try to say that not only is this [shallow, artificial assessment] useless,
but we are destroying education
by participating in this sort of thing.

And – and that's why I was resisting
even though I was chair of the department
and was required to come up ways to
assess classes for
pre-determined learning outcomes –

So I've tried to be transgressive….

Next, **Professor Monarch Butterfly** draws examples of the in/appropriate from his/her historical research of woman's suffrage in 19th century Britain.

Speaking of in/appropriate behavior!
Consider Ray Strachey (née Costelloe)
[British feminist politician and writer]—
who was in the suffrage movement
[1850 up to about 1920….]
and then part of the government –

Talk about in/appropriate behavior! …

[Laughter]

The women in the women's social and political union
were doing things like standing up at the fancy restaurants
and shouting out, Votes for women!
or putting lighted kerchiefs in post boxes…
or even defacing art works in fancy – in famous museums.
It was property damage, but not violent people damage. Anyway, this is
in/appropriate behavior –

[Laughter]

But it was…this kind of thing
that finally got woman's suffrage
onto people's radar …

This is in/appropriate behavior **…**
They weren't lady-like!

[Laughter]

Considering privilege: *"If we had nothing, we'd be out there raising hell."* ~ Professor Sea Turtle

As earlier indicated, emerging from a deeply considered silence, the recurrent theme of *privilege* arose early in our dialogue. Responding to the question, *What is the question or questions that arise out of my deepest feeling*—in the context of our clean, sunny, high-tech room, with an abundance of nutritious food, and opportunity—the "luxury"—to make art, or even to think deeply—Professor Lady Slipper breaks the silence. Again: "My question is what does all of this mean within the context of the suffering in the world? Is it meaningful, is it important, is it a luxury that privileged people have to engage in, or is it important? That's a question not a statement."

Grounded in an awareness of my own privilege, I have held some form of this question myself as I've pursued this degree, taking time and resources to think and write—while the world—even in the few short years since I began—has seemingly grown ever more unequal, unjust, and unsustainable. This awareness comes with mixture of guilt (my inherited privilege comes at the expense, in part, of others' suffering); gratitude (I appreciate and try not to take for granted opportunities that privilege has afforded me, especially educational ones); responsibility (I aim to use my position, such as it is, to work for eco/sociocultural

change); and defiance (I refuse to submit to increasingly prevalent anti-intellectual attitudes toward education itself—and the Arts—as privileged "intellectual luxuries," as Ronald Reagan once said of university education (Berrett, 2015). I remember clearly being told at our orientation by a professor just how privileged I and my cohort members were. We could count ourselves among the approximately 1.75-3.25% of the adult population in the U.S. pursuing a doctorate.

Professor Crane ponders privilege.

Each un/masked professor seemed to be well attuned to the issue of privilege, and to their own privilege, especially *as* professors. Professor Crane gives voice to a discouraged weariness, seemingly also shared by many. Like most others in the room—for the majority of her/his life and career as an educator—Professor Crane has been committed to issues of social- and eco-justice, and to the possibilities for philosophical, social, cultural, and ecological renewal through education, community and movement building, and the Arts. Perhaps this weariness comes from all the years s/he has thought and taught about some of the biggest problems in our world—such as obstacles to peace, justice and sustainability—and then looking around at how little has changed, or even how things, in many ways, have apparently gotten worse. In her/his expression of weariness, **Professor Crane** suggests that the best approach to transposing the world—or little worlds—for her/him—may finally lie in acts of listening, developing presence, communing with and giving expression to mystery and beauty, and engaging in the Arts of reenchantment, such as writing poetry. This doesn't mean s/he ceases listening to or caring about—or even suffering with[141]—the pain.

[141] compassion ~ from com- "together" (see com-) + pati "to suffer" (see passion). Latin *compassio* is an ecclesiastical loan-translation of Greek sympatheia (see sympathy).

I've been, many times,
just overwhelmed
with questions of privilege.
For a very long time
that's been at the center
of a lot of what I've thought about
and taught and questioned—
Honestly, at this point—
I've grown weary of questions.

I desperately want to move
into the silence,
to live
as a poet.

To me, poetry
is the voice that speaks
about the enchantment
of the world—

and it's a privilege
to be involved with that.
That is a privilege.

[Pause, silence]

But I have a feeling
that if one listens
to that voice
and can express it
that something may ripple
out, something that I would
not be able to control
or want to control,
or maybe even understand.

That's what draws me at this point—
I hope to get beyond questions.

Not the answers necessarily—
just presence,
to listen to the voice.

Professors Lady Slipper and Tiger respond.

This idea that "something may ripple out, something that I would not be able to control or want to control, or maybe even understand" is a powerful suggestion to the group. And, so, **Professor Lady Slipper** responds to this idea of rippling out into the world:

> *Teaching is like throwing a pebble*
> *in a pond. You never see*
> *where the ripples stop.*
> *That keeps me going a lot,*
> *the idea that just raising consciousness*
> *about the realities of the world,*
> *both the life affirming things and…*
> *but you know, when I look at kids or read about kids—*
> *I haven't actually seen it—spending their lives*
> *scrounging through the technological waste of the western world*
> *to get little pieces of copper from cell phones and computers*
> *that they can sell, you know…*
> *it seems kind of pretentious to talk about life affirming, thinking about that—*
> *it's easy for us to say, but when does that kid have an opportunity*
> *to contemplate what's life affirming?*

Lady Slipper continues after more consideration of teaching being akin to throwing a stone into a pool of water, creating ripples that flow out beyond immediate vision.

> *I'm a pretty content person, yet –*
>
> *I had a student a few years ago*
> *every time he left my class*
> *he said he wanted to go*
> *commit suicide.*
>
> *He was joking, of course,*
> *but you know, we all know—*
> *Life outside a college town,*
> *outside of privilege…*
>
> *privileged existence…*

You can cite the horrendous statistics
of all the suffering that exists in the world—
I'll just mention one—
35,000 people every day die
of malnutrition or hunger related diseases
every day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year.
You do the math. ...

My life as a researcher—
having lived in rural Mexico and in India,
having done research in Appalachia—
your awareness of those situations becomes heightened
when you share experiences with people who exist in those conditions.

So, what you were saying Professor Crane, it really—
has haunted me—being a professor—
it's a position of extreme privilege.

I get paid to do what I really enjoy and love doing
I don't have to worry about things
that billions of people have to worry about every day—
As a researcher I'm also privileged
that they let me into their lives and share things with me.

Professor Tiger, then, responds by way of an example from his/her research in Africa—spanning a bridge for Professors Lady Slipper and Crane between suffering in a cruel world and affirmative joy—as experienced even in the struggles of people living precarious lives, whose suffering is both revealed through and relieved by the creative power of expressive arts.

One of my most joyful situations
I've ever been in culturally
was in Moshi in Tanzania
in a clinic among the workers
who were working with AIDS –
families disrupted by AIDS.

They started every morning singing
in a big circle and it was –

I came back saying
we've got to sing!
we have to start our mornings
by having this singing,
and everybody in a circle
would dance and sing.

I went to a symposium
where people were dealing with really hard issues
instead of having a coffee break
everybody got up and started rocking out
to wonderful music and dancing
and singing—these were our breaks.

It was a distinctly joyful way
of managing hard issues.
So now, that was an aside
following from what Lady *Slipper….*

How do we have that impact on that kind of suffering?
Is it possible to do anything of substance—
beyond ourselves—beyond the privileged position
beyond my garden and my new deck, you know? …

Perhaps the privileged view from the deck, when it is broad and compassionate enough to take in and be with suffering—and joy—of other human- and more-than-human creatures—and to also be present to, perhaps, both the garden's potential abundance and its mournful withering—this is where we may find redemption and recovery—and the place from which to declare solidarity with and commitment toward healing our at once beautiful and imperiled world. Could it be this solidarity begins with singing and dancing and poetry—and "within the community of life-systems…by means of story and shared dream

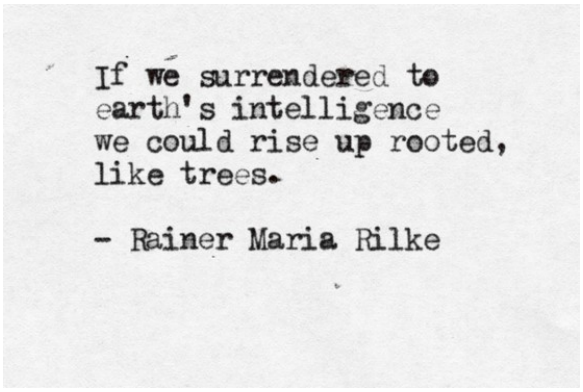
experience" (Berry, 1999, p. 159)? Is this in/appropriate, in the context of education in a time of mass extinction?

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: *The Vine that Ate the South*

I woke this morning
to a furious, unseasonable rain,
my dream-thinking sprouting
radicant ideas about
invasive plant species
coming to devour
the indigenous and local:
creeping buttercup, common
honeysuckle, multiflora rose,
Virginia creeper, kudzu.

How can these words
become a welcome mat
at the threshold,
make solidarity
with the refugee,
host the wayfarer,
stop the machine?

I knew my dreams were talking to
my theoretical questions.
I haven't put it all together,
but there is something here
about nomadic scholars,
such as myself—traipsing
though dense forests of text and
academic conferences—and climate
refugees crossing borders
to escape floods
and droughts,
hunger and thirst,
and other political tyrannies
of displacement.



The vine that ate the South
spreads clean over the tops of trees
up guy-wires to power poles,
and up the poles,
across high-tension wires,
through narrow chinks
in old barns, supplanting stones
in foundation walls,
spreading across fields,
a foot a day—
swallowing everything—
leaving *vine barrens*
in a wake of impenetrable shadow.

Hermeneutic Play: In/appropriateness, Privilege, the Private, and Proprioception

Hermeneutically imagining-with the word *in/appropriate,* as we've seen, leads to interesting associations and amplifications, with fruitful propositions for our research. Briefly, for this section of our movement, let me begin by explaining more about my process, and then follow the rhizo-etymological trail. We will quickly move through this material, as I want to focus on a particular word that arises in play: *proprioception*.

We'll begin with a list of words that by way of free association I connect with *appropriate* (as both verb and adjective; also *inappropriate*)—such as *proper, property, proprietary, propriety, and proprioception*. (Also: *prop, prop up, apropos, malapropos,* and *propitious*—words we'll parenthetically leave behind.) As it turns out, many of these words share the etymological root from Latin: *proprius, propria, proprium,* variously meaning *individual; own, very own; special, particular, characteristic.* We then can make an easy leap to the Latin, *privus*—which brings us to words like *private, privilege* and, then in combination, *private property*. Next to *private* and *property*, we will also consider *community* and *commons,* and then*, universe* and *university*.

The key findings from this hermeneutic play—which mostly serve as corroboration and reinforcement of our process-relational re/search—draw out the etymological connections between the main themes that emerge from our dialogue—the in/appropriate and privilege—and the way, then, through further association, they return us to themes earlier considered in the discussion of our problem/opportunity. These recurring themes involve the driving global capitalist/neoliberal ideology of our time of mass extinction, which *privileges* individualism, and the *privatization* of public assets. With its imposition of severe and unimaginative austerity programs, this ideology

threatens the very existence of multispecies community, the common good, climate stability, and ecological integrity and sustainability.

From becoming-in/appropriate to becoming-*homo integrans.*

Returning to consideration of the etymological root of appropriate[142], with the Latin *proprius*, meaning "one's own, particular to itself," from pro *privo* "for the individual, in particular," from ablative of *privus* "one's own, individual" (see private). If we juxtapose the inappropriate and appropriate, while taking in the significance of *proprius* and *privus*, or the individual and private, perhaps we can claim that becoming-in/appropriate necessitates a more- or greater-than-individual, collective effort—for the commons, the public, the commonwealth and common good. Becoming-in/appropriate means actively forging community and cross-community alliances—with process-relational, life-affirming and life-loving means—to radically imagine how to live in the world in these times. It involves non-violently counteracting the privileged and privatizing—the unjust and unsustainable—æffects of individualism, capitalism, and speciesism. It means tuning-in to our collective body and correcting our balance on/with the earth, before we tip over the many edges on which we teeter—into oblivion and never to recover.

[142] Turn to Appendix B: *Hermeneutic Play: Leaping from Appropriate to Privilege to Proprioception* to see word associations and etymological connections in more detail.

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: Conditioned to Simulations, We Ignore the Actual; While Thirsty, We Drown

I want to become

My becoming
is confounded
by congested traffic,
the stall and confusion
of roadworks ahead,
the siren call to fear—
man-measured coordinates
of time and place,
insistent clocks' ticking,
devouring infrastructures and
frenetic speed
of human progress
—or is it expiration?

I want to become with
the meandering paths of deer
through long grasses,
a sheltering wood,
tree frogs' song-summons
of another season's turn,
lap and tumble of water
smoothing stones,
slow bloom of bee orchid,
the revolutions of Saturn—
awake to the eternal return
of comings and goings—
and the stark possibilities of
forced and
radical perishing.

Torrential rain, remnant of deadly and destructive Hurricane Isaac (August 2012), pours from the skies on late summer foliage that's just beginning to yellow outside my study window. The shrill warning of the emergency siren on campus, several miles away, blares through space in a ruckus of moist air on the "pinnacle" of this midweek day—precisely at noon on Wednesday—rising from the long valley below, filling my home with alarm. Someone has signed off on the need to be habitually familiarized with these alerts as a central feature of the educational institution, so that we may be ever vigilant to crisis, on edge, absorbing steady increments of cortisol, anxiety and fear embodied, *just in case*. I feel it in my body—a benumbed, crouching anxiety. I breathe deep and say to myself, "*This is only a test*."

Fight or flight—or freeze—in effect, normalized…only another test. The effects of a constantly activated stress response are mostly negative: "prolonged cortisol secretion…results in significant physiological changes" (Cortisol, n.d., para. 14). Among

the many changes are the "weakening of the activity of the immune system" (para. 22); changes to "cells in the hippocampus resulting in impaired learning," and "inhibition of memory retrieval of already stored information" (para. 76); disrupted sleep with tiger breath on our necks; obesity; linked to some cancers, including a mother's breast.

We are a people practiced in duck-and-cover, in drills for evacuation, for fires and storms and cracked gunmen. I wonder to what degree these regular calls to vigilance are (unconsciously?) designed to—or in effect—interrupt our attentions from other alarming realities, such as the "the long emergency," the term coined by James Howard Kunstler (2005) for the "converging catastrophes of the twenty-first century"? And how are their a/effects similar to the routine standardized tests foisted upon students, which distract from thinking beyond and across limited (far from multiple) choices, where only one, predetermined answer is "correct," and threat of "failure" the object of anxiety and fear, demanding obedience—or else, perhaps, the benumbing source of boredom, apathy, depression, delinquency, and/or addiction. (This is only another test.)

Perhaps it is obvious. But of course, it is impossible to separate species extinctions and education from the phenomena of climate disequilibria, so this naturally weighs heavily in my contemplations of loss. It is difficult to take in the enormity of the cascading crises upon us. What do we say to the children?

Our bodies become weathered with
drought, flood, and fire,
thawing ice and red tides,
Diablo winds and polar vortexes,
with unquenchable thirst and
near to drowning
all matter of troublesome
seasons out-of-kilter.

> There is no guarantee that we will make it in time for civilization, or even complex life forms, to survive; but it is clear that there's no alternative, because now we are, in systems terms, "on runaway," consuming our own life support system. I consider it an enormous privilege to be alive now, in this Turning, when all the wisdom and courage we ever harvested can be put to use and matter supremely. (Macy, n.d., The elm dance, para. 1)
>
> Self-regulating systems are found in nature, including the physiological systems of our body, in local and global ecosystems, and in climate—and in human learning processes (from the individual on up through international organizations like the UN). (Systems theory, n.d., para. 3)

Proprioception in the Body Politic and "Proper" Responses to Systems Feedback

I have come to understand the metaphoric possibilities of the term *proprioception*[143] by way of interrogating (playing with) the etymology of the word *inappropriate*. And so, I am using this metaphor to suggest the *appropriateness*—perhaps necessity—*of the in/appropriate*—as a proprioceptive response-ability vital for compensating within living systems that have become—as a result of *homofractugenic* impacts on these systems—woefully out of balance—possibly even in run-away. I'd like to suggest that *becoming-in/appropriate* works towards transpositioning knowings, attitudes, identities and behaviors within human systems (i.e., education) that re-establish equilibrium—not as a *return* to former "normal" or (ideal?) states/stasis, but as emergence and movement-towards and into the creative and novel. In process-relational,

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143 *proprioception* (n.) ~ 1906, from proprioceptor, from Latin *proprius* "own" (see proper) + reception. Coined by English neurophysiologist C.S. Sherrington (1857-1952). // Proprioceptive ~ relating to **stimuli that are produced and perceived within an organism**, especially those connected with the position and movement of the body.

living systems terms, *becoming-in/appropriate,* as I have come to think of it, is an emergent/cy response to the red-alert of systems' feedback—or the adaptive self-organization of an open system—or systems-within-systems, including the planet itself. If we ignore the *proprio*ceptors within our body politic that signal the need to radically adjust our balance, we are bound to falter, to topple—perhaps leaving us unable to recover at all.

If this seems radical, it is because it is—for, if we hope to retreat at all from a certain ecocidal brink, education in a time of mass extinction calls for nothing less than radically relational re-thinking, re-imagining, re-acting, and trusting. Perhaps, as I have read and heard it said, the best we can hope for is to develop resilience, and somehow learn to adapt to an unimaginably changed world—one filled with unfathomable suffering. Developing this resilience should include educating for empathy, compassion, and conflict transformation.

It has to be said that some respected climate scientists (e.g., Hansen et al., 2015) predict that we are already too late to avert devastating "ice melt, sea level rise and superstorms." Having just been published, the study has yet to be fully debated, and so its conclusions are far from consensus. Yet, these scientists propose that we have underestimated the scale, speed and scope of what is shaping up to be climate catastrophe.

> We conclude that the 2˚C global warming 'guardrail,' affirmed in the Copenhagen Accord (2009), does not provide safety, as such warming would likely yield sea level rise of several meters along with numerous other severely disruptive consequences for human society and ecosystems. (p. 20121)

While the conclusions reached in this study might be debated regarding matters of degree, there is little debate among scientists that we are, in fact, living in and causing the Sixth Mass Extinction (e.g., Kolbert, 2014).

It is clear, regardless, that without a profound paradigmatic change in/for our human enterprise/ project—and without an equally profound change in education and educational leadership—multiple positive feedback loops[144] set in motion by extractive, carbon- and consumer-based globalized capitalist economies are on course to further spin out of control—in systems terminology "go into runaway," eventually leading to devastating systems breakdown on a wide scale. Macy (1991b) instructs that positive feedback is essential to life processes (creativity comes from disequilibrium), yet require checks and balances "within more inclusive [and stabilizing] negative feedback loops" (p. 75). If left unchecked (without *in/appropriate* interventions)—as in proliferation of greenhouse gasses or the destruction of rainforests, for example—these positive feedback loops will inevitably lead to runaway growth and/or collapse:

> [I]n the evolution of organisms and cultures [the role of positive feedback loops] is fundamental and constructive, promoting self-organization and differentiation into new forms of adaptation and intelligence. ***This is because they trigger changes in behaviour that depart from pre-established norms.*** When and if these

[144] "[N]egative feedback loops stabilize the system within its current trajectory. They reduce deviation between goal and performance, producing "homing-in" behavior and reestablishing the status quo. Positive feedback loops reinforce or amplify the deviations, each change adding to the next. Producing both novelty and instability, they can generate runaway growth or collapse unless stabilized anew within more inclusive negative feedback loops. When that happens, positive feedback conduces to modifying the goals of a given system. Note that these terms diverge form popular lay usage, where *negative feedback* connotes criticism and *positive feedback* implies encouragement." (Macy, 1991, p. 75)

> novel behaviors become stabilized or nested in new, more inclusive negative feedback loops, they have generated something adaptive and new. Much that is valued in nature and culture is the fruit of this kind of mutual causality. Through positive feedback, biological, cognitive, and social systems complexify their organization, in apparent defiance of the Second Law of Thermodynamics—breaking ground for the new and reaching toward greater variety, interaction, and improbability. (Macy, 1991b, p. 98, emphasis added)

Something else is more important than fear.

Becoming-in/appropriate arises from and incorporates both a full facing-into extinction and climate catastrophe along with a "fearless" embrace of living in precarious times. Fearless living doesn't mean a vanquishing of fear; it is living fully in spite of one's fears, while consciously acting to transpose those fears through the radical (alchemical) imagination, as we have considered. This reminds me of an unreferenced quote I ran across years ago, attributed to Ambrose Hollingworth Redmoon: "Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear."

Fearless, in/appropriate living in precarious times includes being courageously and compassionately present to love and death—and the full range of feeling and emotion that arises from these core human experiences. This range in/of the bodyheartmind can be evoked, deepened and transposed through expressive Artistic processes and enactments, rituals, and the radical imagination. Becoming-in/appropriate is thus meant as a processal movement toward change deep within individuals and communities (including, of course, educational), becoming attuned to, and emerging from the eco-cultural challenges we face, toward sustained *love* and *life*.

Following directions on the Cosmic map.

In what is perhaps humanity's most profound and consequential moment of disequilibrium—and, therefore, so, a supreme proprioceptive opportunity to regain balance by transposing, reinventing and re-organizing ourselves—becoming-with the Ecozoic era—we might do well to consider the cosmic dimension of the project before us, as Thomas Berry would surely advise. In what might be read as guidelines for hope—of the kind that "transcends the world that is immediately experienced and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons" (Havel, in Havel & Hvížďala, 2004, p. 82)—the universe offers a star-strewn process-relational map that offers us the possibility for multiple ways of becoming—while not revealing our destination. Process philosopher, Nancy Frankenberry (2000) says:

> Recent work in cosmology suggests that space-time relations move not only toward increasing entropy or disorder, but toward those critical moments of disequilibrium when the spontaneously adaptive self-organization of the open system—above all the living system—comes into play and future structure is generated from the flux of a liminal present. The process of separation, transition, and reintegration occurs in terms of the disruption of a steady state at or near equilibrium, which brings matter increasingly far from equilibrium to a point at which a "decision" is made between alternative possibilities randomly presented by its environment, resulting in its reorganization in novel emergent form. The cosmological story, too, can be told in terms of (1) disruption of a prior equilibrium, (2) transition toward an unknown outcome, and (3) reintegration into a renewed and transformed equilibrium —a process made possible by a

directional but indeterminate universe continually engendering new order from chaos. (para. 12)

Clearly, as the cosmos moves on, prehending its next intergalactic occasions, a "decision" *will* be made regarding our fate in a time of mass extinction. The question remains: Will humans influence "the decision" in a way that perpetuates our terrestrial kin and kind toward new affirmative horizons? If so, we might then call our renewed species *homo integrans*.

Vulture's Song

As segue toward Movement Eight, wherein we will briefly consider the important concept of time in relationship to our problem/opportunity, let's return for a final few moments to our encounter. At this stage of our day, we are near to winding up our afternoon dialogue and closing our circle, for now. Come evening, we will gather in my home, to circle around the old dining table, where as a child and adolescent, I always had a seat among the adults, and where I was served large portions of my education. Together, there, we broke bread and shared wine, and though I was sure everyone would be too depleted to sustain any further conversation around questions of education in a time of mass extinction, the table was lively with stories—stories giving voice to anger, frustration, sadness, determination, and love—voices, you might say, also resonant with in/appropriate laughter and joy.[145]

[145] I recorded a full hour and a half of fruitful dialogue that transpired this evening. But the ideas fed by this portion of dialogue are for another time.

But let's get back to the afternoon's encounter—and our hermeneutic circle—situated around the mandala with our ghost gestures and masks.

As clock-time presses and bodies tire of sitting, our dialogue draws toward a natural recess. I ask the group to stand and breathe and stretch. Movement of bodies releases sweet, playful laughter, and then calm. I draw our collective attention back to our center piece—the Truth mandala—and ask participants to place their masks in one or more of the four quadrants—spaces for grief/love, anger/passion for justice, fear/courage, and/or emptiness/possibility. Each quadrant contains at least one mask, and several masks straddle more than one space. I (too) tentatively suggest that they take up their masks and speak through them. How might they express themselves directly through their masks? But we've really not enough time to fully venture down this path, which I believe could yield tremendously fruitful data—and further transpositional insight and healing.

Sadly, I have to admit I have not sufficiently trusted that even this group of extraordinary scholars would venture into this vulnerable, performative territory. A piece of truth may also be that I did not trust my own vulnerability to sufficiently deliver the invitation to truly radical imagination. I console myself knowing that it likely would have taken more time for a thorough process to reach the required level of trust and openness. (Again, what if we had had three days together—to play, make art, and pursue dialogue?)

Susan: *In closing our circle now, I'll just share a little bit about what has been floating around in my fantasy of where we could take this if we had enough courage and time.*

[Laughter]

And I was thinking about Joanna's ritual that she did with about twenty-eight people in tight concentric circles—around the mandala. She invited everyone—their bodies—into the circle, to stand either in one of the quadrants or in all of them or in the

center—to give voice to their fear or their grief or anger or emptiness. And it was so incredibly powerful. I haven't had the courage to ask you all to do that, and I'm not going to ask you to do that. I'm just imagining—what if…

[Laughter]

What if we got up and—and really howled, you know. And—I'm going to just ask you to think about what that looks like and what—and why—why do I not have the courage to ask you? Is it because I don't trust that you have the courage to do it, as academics?

[Laughter]

And so I'm leaving this circle open now, just with that thought—just to ponder for myself and—

Professor Sea Turtle: [***Howl***…]

And, so, what might have been a more direct request to don their masks and speak their emotional truths through them never fully materialized. Yet in the end, I am surprised and deeply moved—as, I believe, most others are—as one participant—in fact, who else, but the in/appropriate Professor Vulture?—begins singing—scatting—a wordless, improvisational jazz-like melody. I literally get goosebumps as I simultaneously recognize my own skepticism and the power of our poietic-dialogic process to have evoked this extraordinarily beautiful and haunting moment. Yet another threshold moment. A suspended silence follows—in which I/we recognize the sum of our and the mandala's intra-active work…

Eighth Movement

Love's Not Time's Fool

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,

But bears it out even to the edge of doom. (Shakespeare, from Sonnet 116)

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: *The Slow Metabolism of Grief's Body*

November 2013 ~ It has been twenty months' since our dissertation proposal was approved for this research. Meanwhile, scientists at Mauna Loa Observatory on the big island of Hawaii announced in May of this year that global CO2 emissions have "crossed a threshold at 400 parts per million for the first time in millions of years [causing] a sense of dread to spread around the world" (Smith, 2013, para. 1). The moons since—charged with *listening, ingesting, descending, attending, anguishing, dreaming, roiling, getting used to waning dark, and then to light, seeding, incubating, aborting, miscarrying, mourning, conceiving again, witnessing, weathering, giving birth, letting go*—fold in and out of me. Sometimes it is a just a matter of wringing words from the slow metabolism of Grief's body. Yes, Grief has a body. Grief is not a feeling, but something we do with our bodies.

Hélène Cixous (1994) conceives writing as a ladder, which "is neither immobile nor empty. It is animated. It incorporates the movement it arouses and inscribes" (p. 4).

> To us this ladder has a *descending* movement, because the ascent, which evokes effort and difficulty, is toward the bottom. I say *ascent* downward because we ordinarily believe descent is easy. The writers I love are *descenders*, explorers of

> the lowest and deepest. Descending is deceptive. Carried out by those I love the descent is sometimes intolerable, the descenders descend with difficulty; sometimes they stop descending. (p. 5)

Descent takes time. It must be taken slowly, with care. So does emerging from the depths; you have to take care to control the speed if your ascent—to decompress as you go, just the right pace—or perish.

Time Enough for Love: Researching, Writing, and Leading with Slow Resolve

> I write to quell the pain. I write to migrating birds with the hubris of language. I write as a form of translation. I write with the patience of melancholy in winter. I write because it allows me to confront that which I do not know. I write as an act of faith. I write as an act of slowness. I write to record what I love in the face of loss. (Williams, 2001, p. 6)

January 2015 ~ I begin my writing this morning with reflections about time and *slowness* after months of knowing I would need to include this section somewhere in my thesis.[146] The interlude above from my journal points to this.

slow sunrise
slow dancing
moving like
molasses
slow love

As I think and write, I am tempted to gaze out the window at the sun's glow on the wintered mountain, while I also nurse a mug of strong, black coffee. Coffee—as it is for so many—is my legal drug of choice that I consume on a daily basis—a stimulant to counter another restless night's sleep (also known as after-

[146] Some months ago, I made a lengthy list of words and phrases that I associated with slowness, and then I had the idea of posting on social media what turned out to be a poem-like list. I asked my friends and family to add to the list. You will find our combined "slow poems" in the little text boxes as we move through this essay.

dark or in-the-dark research). Thomas Berry (2012) said of such a restive night, "I wake up in the night and cannot go back to sleep. The future swells in the dark, too large a room for one [wo]man to sleep well in" (p. 220). So, I have done—and do—an awful lot of my thinking for this paper in the wee hours—when my psyche is hard at work, in a kind of proprioceptive discernment.

I also imbibe coffee as a bulwark against the treachery of depression, and for the speedy edge I hope to gain as I write against the clock, toward the "finish-line"—a Dead Line. It is discomforting and difficult—and yet, hopefully, and finally, liberating—to stitch these important thoughts into these pages. The subjects of time and temporality have hovered within/around my enquiry, stalking and haunting it from its conception. In fact, probably one of the most significant and difficult aspects of this whole enquiry process has been related to time—the ensnarement of time—inseparable as it is from my own embodied experience and relationship to/with time. As it turns out, I believe, time-qualities—or our perceptions and manipulations of time—how we accommodate, challenge and/or subvert dominant patterns of time—"hegemonic time" (Griffiths, 2002)—are central to education, scholarship and leadership in a time of mass extinction.

Let me first address my embodied experience and relationship with—fraught as it is, and why the theme is personally, philosophically, hermeneutically, and educationally important, as I write toward conclusion of this project—which, I'm sure, many see as having taken far too long to conduct, perhaps especially because we are

snail's pace
slow food
slow kiss
slow cooker
(I'd like to get you on a)
slow boat to China

addressing education in a time of mass extinction—and clearly—"time is running out."[147] I also have been reminded as much, by people I love and respect—which has twisted its way both through humiliation and resistance as a form of data. ("What is *wrong* with her," I imagine them saying—which also, I sometimes ask myself.) Let's ruminate on the data of shame and resistance, and then consider the *hurry-up-and-slow-down* paradox.

Alchemical Autoecographic Interlude: *Flashback with Dream and Poem Fragment*

> *I am still wondering about trains and tracks, and going off tracks; platforms and schedules; timing, and waiting (together with you), and floods and washouts in dreams….*
>
> ***A piacere*[148]*: an excerpt.***
>
> … Is this acceptably scholarly;
> following standard procedure;
> sufficiently leaderly?
> How does it contribute
> to The Discipline; The Institution?
> How fast can you run?
> How much time have you left? (asked The Dean)
> You have to get on with your life! (said The Dean)
> Time is running out! (s/he said)
> And I've barely gotten started.
>
> Archetypal entanglements: the Old Guard,
> Saboteur, Dissident,
> Disheartened, shout
> over one another:

---

147 Or, "Time is not on our side," declared UN secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon during the October 2014 release in Copenhagen of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report in climate change (Carrington, 2014, para. 3).

148 *A piacere* ~ At the pleasure or discretion of the performer, typically with tempo and the use of rubato with a particular passage. *Rubato* ~ A practice common in Romantic compositions of taking part of the duration from one note and giving it to another. It involves the performer tastefully stretching, slowing, or hurrying the tempo as she/he sees fit, thus imparting flexibility and emotion to the performance.

Impostor! Charlatan! Fuck you! Help.
I desire joy—want to feel
creativity coursing
through art-life,
not competition,
this clinching
panic at my throat.

A way into the future must consider—not
vanquish—the bodymind
from research and writing,
—uncover, place, claim—
becoming-*a piacere*
wholly at the heart.
It's messy and inefficient. Slow and beautiful
and "(true)."
Vulnerability is not a choice, but a demand.

Culture's (c)old expectations—attempts to vanquish the passionate heart—
still unvanquished,
van·quish (transitive verb)
1. defeat somebody in battle
2. defeat somebody in competition
3. overcome emotion!
to overcome, suppress, or subdue an emotion, feeling, or idea.
[…]
Old Time ticks, tick, tick. Dead
lines. I contemplate
ecocide, extinction—
while *Deep Time* harkens,
vibrates, resonates, sings, dares:
"Come! Listen! See!"

I have often felt that I was born in the wrong era—and though I might be charged as a hopeless romantic—perhaps I would have been better suited to the contemplative or wayfaring life, tribal life, or to the rhythms of a rural farming community in times past. Simply stated, I metabolize (and try, as much as possible, to savor and discern) experience slowly: food, information, the sunrise, words, art, the incoming tide, dreams, love, grief…. I am constantly working to reconcile the speed of my body/mind with the frenetic, ever-accelerating social, mechanical and digital worlds around me (when I am not retreating from them). Even so, I frequently find myself proclaiming my relative slowness—even sometimes apologizing for it—which can feel like apologizing for blue eyes.

slow learner
slow school
slow burn
time's up

Within my confession is a paradox, part shame and part rebellion. I am ashamed because, awkwardly, I don't always (or seldom?) fit normative expectations regarding time and efficiency. "Being slow" is charged with social stigma, and try as I might to cast it off, I am still subject to a well-conditioned, ill-disposed inner voice. Yet I also know Turtle as my medicine; Turtle subverts shame. Turtle helps me to see that my pace is also about awareness, attention, intention, integration and depth—traits invaluable to Deep Education and transpositional/transformational learning, and teaching that we deny and hobble in educational settings, i.e. where the school day is fragmented in 45-50-minute increments (paralleled by knowledge, often quantified, and fragmented into disciplines); by rigid prescription of

I am moving right along today like a herd of turtles.

Slower than a Three-toed sloth

The Banana Slug is said to be the slowest mollusc in the world; its average speed is only approximately 0.000023 m/s.

Coral 0 m/s (0 ft/s) The coral is one of the only animals that do not move.

The Dwarf Syngnathidas (Seahorse) swims at about 0.01 mph, making it the slowest fish in the world.

What did the snail say while riding on a turtle"s back? "Wheeeeeee!!"

developmental milestones, such that, for instance, all children should read by age so-and-so (an arbitrary age that seems to keep getting younger); and when "time is up, put your pencils down," or "time is running out to complete your degree/thesis."

> *I am trying to teach my mind*
> *to bear the long, slow growth*
> *of fields, and to sing*
> *of its passing while it waits.*
>
> (Wendell Berry, 2012b, p. 121)

In a time of mass extinction—that is also a time of accelerating cultural and economic speed (think, for instance, of the movement of capital in nanoseconds[149], or the speed of fighter jets[150]—and toward what ends?)—*teaching our minds to bear the long, slow growth of fields* seems more urgent than ever, when even our memories/collective memory is endangered by our haste to "progress" and forget. Our forgetting forces into extinction a second time the creatures lost to our careless inattention, distractedness, and arrogance. Milan Kundera (1996) says, "There is a secret bond between slowness and memory, between speed and forgetting" (p. 39). "In existential mathematics," he continues, "experience takes the form of two basic equations: the degree of slowness is directly proportional to the intensity of memory; the degree of speed is directly proportional to the intensity of forgetting" (p. 39).

slow as a wet weekend
slow as a month of Sundays
painfully slow

149 "Financial traders are in a race to make transactions ever faster. In today's high-tech exchanges, firms can execute more than 100,000 trades in a second for a single customer" (Buchanan, 2015, para. 1)

150 "The Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird holds the official Air Speed Record for a manned airbreathing jet aircraft with a speed of 3,530 km/h (2,193 mph)" (Flight airspeed record, n.d., para. 2).

I rebel/resist (un/consciously?) against the tyranny of Chronos, in part, because I sense/know the consequences to people and planet of "normative time"[151]. I prefer the frame of empowered rebellion—which is *in/appropriate*—a positive passion (Braidotti, 2006)—and so much more creative than shame. Pushing traditional scholarly boundaries—working in the methodological ecotone, subverting standard formatting rules (e.g. use of discursive footnotes), disclosing love and grief, incorporating art and poetry and dreams, re-searching with soul in mind, being inefficient—these are experimental forms of slow productive dissent in an age of extinction. There are even sometimes gestures of defiance against shame and against efficiency and speed embedded in my use of language and writing itself—when, for instance, like Pico Iyer (2012), I use "longer and longer sentences as a small protest against—and attempt to rescue any readers I might have from—the bombardment of the moment" (para. 1). Iyer helps me defend my use of long sentences, as he continues:

> …the long sentence: the collection of clauses that is so many-chambered and lavish and abundant in tones and suggestions, that has so much room for near-contradiction and ambiguity and those places in memory or imagination that can't be simplified, or put into easy words, that it allows the reader to keep many things in her head and heart at the same time, and to descend, as by a spiral staircase,

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[151] Out of curiousity, after I wrote these words, I did an Internet search (which took extra time) with keywords, "normative time." Top results yeilded multiple references to *normative time* as "the period within which students, under normal circumstances, are expected to complete requirements for the doctorate. … Normative Time **cannot** be extended." (UCSD, Department of Psychology, n.d., para. 2, emphasis original). The first result not tied to a university graduate program (but from a class blog for a course in Feminism and Film at Vanderbilt) states: "The normative time that is featured on television is based heavily on linearity, heterosexuality, family, expected milestones, and various other assumptions about the lifestyles of viewers" (Balembbn, 2013, para. 1).

> deeper into herself and those things that won't be squeezed into an either/or. With each clause, we're taken further and further from trite …[to]… the tender, neglected spaces in the reader. (para. 4)

I will return to further ponder the practice and importance of slow writing and slow scholarship, but for the moment….

Step off the treadmill of production. Pause. A deep breathe. Or two or three. Feel the tender, neglected spaces in you.

Proceeding from "normative time"… Sounding even more insidious is the term, "hegemonic time"; or "normative hegemonic time" (Milojević, 2008): "Stealthily, nastily, one type of time [that] has grown horribly dominant [is] Western, Christian, linear, abstract, clock-dominated, work-oriented, coercive, capitalist, masculine and anti-natural—Hegemonic Time" (Griffiths, 2002, para. 3). Normative/hegemonic time is antithetical to liminal time—and so frequently robs us of presence, awareness, insight, depth, caring, connectedness, sacredness, loving, curiosity, play, pleasure, joy, creativity, beauty, and physical and mental health—even sometimes *feeling* itself (and numbness, in turn, gives way to yet more acceleration—and disconnection, depression…). Liminal time incubates transformation/transposition; normative/hegemonic time stymies and quells it.

In that I am a product of conditioning and discipline in/by normative/hegemonic time (especially by schooling), I may, in fact, not *genuinely* know/embody "natural time." Given that qualification, I'll venture to declare that a constant tension exists between the "natural" rhythms of my body/mind and the contrived and maniacal digital-military-industrial pace—also "computime"—that tears violently at the entangled gossamer fabrics of individual psyches and bodies, families, communities, creatures, weathers, climate, the land, seas, and stars. This relatively new "computime," as Jeremy Rifkin (1987) calls it, "represents the final abstraction of time and its complete separation from human experience and rhythms of nature" (p. 15). Ivana Milojević (2008) traces the origins of this fabricated notion of time:

> [F]rom its very beginning narratives of linearity, colonisation and domination (over nature, and other peoples) have accompanied the advent of linear, industrial, clock time. Capitalism, industrialism and colonialism, as well as patriarchy, helped with a construction and an imposition of such an approach to time as well as with the attempts to standardise, to unify global temporal diversity under a banner of a normative hegemonic time. (p. 333)

While also appreciating the positive benefits of certain limits/boundaries/conditions (which are, in fact, essential to creativity—see, for instance, Nachmanovitch, 1990)—and the fact that others, indeed, "naturally" metabolize experience faster than I—I long to live (and witness others living, learning and leading) at ease—*a piacere*—creatively within an economy/culture that is attuned to the rhythms, cycles, seasons—that "never 'come and go too violently'" (McKibben, 2003, quoting Eiseley, p. 84)—the (once) steady (never static), patient moods and senses of sun and moon and seasons—

earth time, cosmic time. For me, negotiating the perpetual tensions between "natural" and normative/hegemonic time is exhausting and dispiriting; and is a major source of stress and dis/ease, even for those with "faster" metabolisms, in our speed- and efficiency- (and denial-of-death-) obsessed society—including, especially, in most schools (at all levels) and most workplaces.

Adagio[152] for Childhood

> One of the most tenacious conceptual threats to … Hegemonic Time, is childhood itself. Children have a dogged, delicious disrespect for worktime, punctuality, efficiency and for schooled uniform time. Their time is an eternal present. They live (given half a chance) pre-industrially, in *tutti-frutti* time, roundabout time, playtime; staunch defenders of the ludic revolution, their hours are stretchy, ribboned, enchanted and wild: which is why adults want to tame their time so ferociously, making them clock-trained, teaching them time-measurement as if they were concrete fact. The school clock is pointed to as the ultimate authority, which even the Head obeys. (Griffiths, 2002, para. 9)

Normative/hegemonic time is inscribed into children's bodies "through a temporal disciplining of the body in the everyday social practices of the classroom," says Chris Jenks (2001, p. 68). Children are seen to develop and mature in relation to external and time-derived conceptions of their social, intellectual, physical and moral competencies.

no joke....slow poke!
drawling along,
slow simmer,
slow slide,
mosey move...

Milojević (2011) reminds us that "education has always been instrumental in the teaching of time" (p. 143)—part and parcel of its hidden curriculum. In the twenty-first century,

[152] *Adagio* – slow and stately (literally, "at ease") (60–72 BPM—approximately like an at-rest heartbeat)

we have moved from inculcating industrial time, to imposing and teaching "'compressed' instantaneous time, as in the 'time of computers' which will 'hammer the final nails into the coffin of natural time' (Levine: 75)" (p. 143).

I often wonder what kind of human beings—and, in turn, world—would emerge from school systems more closely calibrated to "natural" time—that is education attuned to differing bodies, and rhythms of days and seasons, with time-enough for connectedness and deep enquiry, including creative wandering. There do, of course, exist educational philosophies and practices—including indigenous education—which take into consideration the importance of time, tempo and rhythm. Some of these approaches, from which we likely could learn much about educating in a time of extinction, include, for instance *Waldkindergarten* ("Forest Schools"), Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner), Montessori, Reggio Emelia, Krishnamurti; deschooling (Illich), and Democratic and Free Schools (i.e. Neill's Summerhill); and (for older learners) critical (eco)pedagogy (Freire, Gadotti) and Folk Schools (Grundtvig). *Time* prevents me from detailing these various methodologies, for now. Doing so could constitute another research project, with an eye to assessing the nature and effects of their respective orientations, qualities and conditions regarding time and temporality—tempo and rhythm.

Jeremy Rifkin (in Griffiths, 1999) likens the conflict between what I am calling natural and normative time to "time wars"—mêlées, Griffiths says, that are "between the violent and fast pace technology and the *lento* tempo which our very bodies require" (p. 46). Griffiths (1999) warns, too, of the "nasty, steely connection between speed and fascism" (p. 52). "[T]he ideology of speed […is…] today's most fascistic force" that administers a "politics which brooks no ideological opposition, a totalitarianism," which,

via competition, demands uniformity, "as speed always does, and destroying environments or people which get in the way" (p. 53).

Normative Time

What has become normative time—Western time—now globalized—is industrial-technological time. Linked to the tyranny of "standards" and "efficiency" based on shrinking knowledge/s and ever-increasing work-to-production ratios (displacing/ making disposable human beings when they can no longer match the speed of machines or computers)—it correlates with the deterioration of human communities and the multiple *homofractigenic* catastrophes that are wreaking havoc on the planet. Scientists with the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and the Stockholm Resilience Centre (2015) have plotted and demonstrated the exponential character of rising greenhouse gas levels, ocean acidification, deforestation and biodiversity deterioration alongside increases in human activity from the industrial era (1750-2010). They call this period the "Great Acceleration"—a second stage of the Anthropocene Age—now "reaching criticality"—dated to the mid-twentieth century, when the human enterprise suddenly and dramatically accelerated after World War II (Steffen et al., 2007, p. 617).

Bill McKibben (2003) maintains that we are in the throes of a "fatal confusion about the nature of time and space" (p. 7). Continuing, he says:

> Though we know that our culture has placed our own lives on a demonic fast forward, we imagine that the earth must work on some other timescale. The long, slow accretion of epochs…lulls us into imagining that the physical world offers us an essentially stable background against which we can run our race. (p. 8).

Michelle Bastian (2012) comments on this fatal confusion, saying it "rests on the implicit distinction Western societies make between the time of culture and the time of nature" (p. 23), which leads us to what I am calling, the hurry-up-and-slow-down paradox.

The Hurry-Up-and-Slow-Down Paradox

I am trying to think and write with/through what I believe is a fundamental paradox concerning education in a time of mass extinction. This paradox concerns the conflict between needing to move quickly and decisively to avert climate catastrophe and mass extinction (while much discourse focuses not on preventing but mitigating and adapting to inevitably and drastically changed environments)—and becoming-educated in/for paradigms which simultaneously help us envision, create and entrain humans to radically different ways of inhabiting life on Earth. Central to this multifaceted paradox, I believe, is our need to *hurry up and slow down*. Bear with me while I try to articulate the elements of this paradox.

Think with me first of geologic time, 4.5 billion-year-old Earth time—the *glacial* pace of change, slow and incremental—eons, epochs and ages. And now consider that, according to Sutterley et al. (2014), "The comprehensive record… [of glacial ice] loss in West Antarctica…shows a tripling in mass loss in recent years with respect to the entire analysed period 1992–2013" (p. 8427). Yes, that's right: the rate at which glacial ice in West Antarctica is melting has tripled in just a decade. To our north, as reported by Feldman (2014), the fastest melting glacier [of those measured by Germany's Alfred Wegener Institute] was the Jakobshavn Glacier in Greenland, which is "descending into the ocean at a rate of 46 meters—or half a football field—each day" (para. 6). So here we have evidence that "at a glacial pace" means something quite different than it did even a

decade ago; once seemingly steady, more-less stable environmental conditions are rapidly—and exponentially—changing before our eyes. Though the evidence clearly shows the rate of such change is rapidly increasing, such phenomena—i.e. climate change, dying oceans, deforestation, pollution, species extinctions—are often still perceived and described as distant and slow-moving threats (until the next firestorm, tornado, or typhoon ravages the neighborhood)—and in turn, our human brains are simply not wired, so say some scientists and psychologists, to easily respond to "slow" threats (Harmon, 2014).

Consider, as McKibben (2003) asks us to do, the "contrast between two speeds [that] is the key fact of our age: between the pace at which the physical world is changing and the pace at which human society is reacting to this change" (p. 12). And herein lies another stratum of the paradox. Collectively, despite the rapid pace of our globalized and technological existence, human beings are seemingly yet *too slow*—neurophysiologically unable to effectively respond to the existential threats of the multiple *homofractigenic* disasters in the making.

While humans, in part, "have come to dominate the planet" because of effective hardwired flight or flight responses to immediate dangers, "threats that develop over decades rather than seconds circumvent the brain's alarm system," says psychologist Daniel Gilbert (Harmon, 2014, para. 10). "Many environmentalists say climate change is happening too fast. No, it's happening too slowly. It's not happening nearly quickly enough to get our attention" (para. 11). "For the human brain," says Gilbert, "climate change simply does not compute." (para. 8)

But, then, how do we understand and borrow from the relatively rapid response to the Great Depression, whereby Roosevelt marshaled government to implement New Deal measures over a period of five years (1933 and 1938) that creatively and concurrently put people to work (even as artists!) and developed infrastructure (some of it even beautiful!); or, during the Second World War, the coordinated mobilization of resources, the agile adaptation of industries, rapid retooling of factories, the training and development of a whole new workforce (with new identities for women)—the collective effort—including sacrifices, such as rationing—that impassioned a nation?

Enfolded in this paradox are multiple other chick-or-egg predicaments—including, for instance, making decisions about personal expenditures of political and intellectual energies, i.e., do I/we "waste time" on another election cycle working for Underdog who passionately and eloquently champions ecojustice—while knowing the political system is fundamentally and likely irreparably broken? Or, indeed, do I continue to spend my intellectual energies in higher education—which is increasingly hobbled by ideologies at odds with critical or aesthetic education, or education for the public good. (Will I have a choice if I become in/appropriate?) Having been simultaneously and systematically corporatized and starved by governments beholden to neoliberalism (a process that continues) has the effect of education being much *farther* removed from being able to envision, create or model the paradigms that will help us heal and move beyond entangled and endangered social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions. So, if I, for example, (or anyone) achieve credentials that position me to work within/for the academy, are my energies then best put to use for change within a possibly collapsing system, and/or to help establish new models without? Where do I most

effectively become-in/appropriate in these urgent times? These are the sorts of questions we must all be asking: "to challenge what we do not yet see takes time, the time whose urgency we owe to all that it means to 'make thinking our' communal 'business'" (Bromley, 2009, p. 230).

Finally, even as I write, perhaps because I write, I have confirmation of the importance of time—how we think about, teach, and inhabit time—to our quest/ions concerning mass extinction. I must, in time, return to this finding for a less abbreviated reflection. But for now, in a supreme irony, as I rush to conclude this brief essay on time—I feel my bodyheartmind shutting down to creativity and clear thinking. Once again, I am reminded, as Rilke (2005, p. 99) says so beautifully…

All this hurrying
soon will be over.
Only when we tarry
do we touch the holy.

Alchemical Autoecographic Cadenza: ***A Transpositional Research Moment***

> If the cadence may be regarded as the cradle of tonality, the ostinato patterns can be considered the playground in which it grew strong and self-confident. (Lowinsky, 1961, p. 5)

As a cold, gusty wind howled through a dark December morning, the poem that follows arrived by surprise around three o'clock—and nearly all at once. Scribbled in pencil in my dream journal, its arrival marks for me a significant alchemical/transpositional moment in my research and writing process. It is as if the poem—which seemed to waken me like a dream with a repeating phrase—*it is in/appropriate*—lifted some huge barrier, took a stuck cork out of the bottle—after which I stopped struggling so hard. Ideas that had been brewing and intermingling for months began to coalesce, broader patterns of text and context began to reveal themselves, and writing came with more focus and ease (while still requiring concerted effort). This is a moment I had hoped would come—while sometimes fearing it would not. The poem shifted and released some unnamable energy—transposing both me, and the work—a saltatory change, both confirming and affirming creative, alchemical process.

It was then—in determining where this poem might come into dynamic play within the broader text (it seems to function as "findings" of sorts), while also considering the "score"—I came upon the idea of the poem as *cadenza*[153]—in part, honouring the mode in

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[153] In music, a *cadenza* (from Italian: *cadenza*, meaning cadence; plural, *cadenze*) is commonly an improvised passage or section, placed near the end of a final cadence, and,

which it arrived—*a piacere* or *ad libitum*—improvised—on its own terms. As I considered the poem's structure, it also struck me how it resembled, in a musical sense, an *ostinato* form. Ostinato, (from Italian: *stubborn*, compare English: *obstinate*) denotes a motif or phrase clearly defined and persistently repeated, usually in the same musical voice. Ostinati (pl.) should have exact repetition, but frequently, the term also includes repetition with variation and development (Apel & Daniel, 1961, p. 210). In the case of this poem, you will recognize a patterned repetition in the phrase: *It is in/appropriate*….

And so, as I pondered apparent contradictions between *cadenza* and *ostinato*, I asked a musician friend if it was possible for the two forms to coincide—to which she replied, "Bottom line, *ostinato* is in relationship, *cadenza* stands on its own" (L. Rose, personal communication, 16 March 2015). And while this confirms the terms' formal contradiction, I've decided its in/appropriateness is suitably apt—in the by-now-familiar methodological role of creative tensionality and paradox. Here, we lean into emergent rhythm/pattern/chant, while finding freedom—and freedom-of-speech, expression-of-voice—in a "final exhale," as we move toward closure of the dissertation.

On a final note, I want to briefly explain a particular concept that surfaces late in the poem: *duende*. (My fantasy is that the poem—and the dissertation as a whole—as existential longing that has become intimate with the presence of extinction—emerges from, embodies and evokes the spirit of *duende*—at least conceptually, if not actually. *Oh, to actually know*

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while improvised, draws thematically from the longer movement (Apel & Daniel, p. 40). Indicated by a *fermata* (birdseye or cyclops eye) in all parts if improvised, a cadenza is usually over a final or penultimate note in a piece or important cadence and the accompaniment rests or sustains a note or chord. Thus it is often before a final *coda* (cadenza, n/d). In early polyphonic music, the *fermata* (It. *fermare*, "to hold") "symbolized the end of a completed phrase, where all the polyphonic lines would come together in stable consonance and hold there as one before beginning again" (**Lindsay,** 2012, para. 3).

that embodiment of expressive freedom—channelled longingly in voice and song....)
Meditating a moment on the concept of *duende* might make a difference in how you encounter and experience the poem in the first place—as you imagine *the spirit of the earth* throughout the poem—as "a force not a labour, a struggle not a thought" (Lorca, 1933/2007, para. 8).

Duende, in simple translation from the Spanish, means "a quality of passion and inspiration; a spirit." But the term contains so much more depth and richness—encompassing aesthetic, philosophical and spiritual significance, which celebrated Spanish poet, Federico Garcia Lorca elaborated in his 1933 essay *Play and Theory of the Duende*. In this essay, Lorca defines *duende* as one of three embodiments of artistic inspiration that arouse human creativity—the other two being muses and angels, which, unlike *duende*, "come from outside us" (1998, p. 50). Lorca writes[154]:

> 'All that has dark sounds has *duende*.' And there's no deeper truth than that. // Those dark sounds are the mystery, the roots that cling to the mire that we all know, that we all ignore, [the fertile silt] from which comes the very substance of art. 'Dark sounds' said the man of the Spanish people, agreeing with Goethe, [who defined *duende* while speaking of Paganini]: 'A mysterious force that everyone feels and no philosopher has explained.' // So, then, the *duende* is a force not a labour, a struggle not a thought. … 'The *duende* is not in the throat: the *duende* surges up, inside, from the soles of the feet.' Meaning, it's not a question of skill, but of a style that's truly alive: meaning, it's in the veins [of blood]: meaning, it's of the most ancient culture of [spontaneous] immediate creation. // This 'mysterious force that everyone feels and no philosopher

[154] Borrowed from two different translations, principally, 2007; and in brackets, 1998.

has explained' is, in sum, *the spirit of the earth*, the same *duende* that scorched Nietzsche's heart as he searched for its outer form … without finding it…." (2007, para. 6-9; 1998, p. 49, italics added) [155]

[155] Lorca also says of *duende: "*Seeking the *duende*, there is neither map nor discipline. We only know it burns the blood like powdered glass, that it exhausts, rejects all the sweet geometry we understand, that it shatters styles" (1933/2007, para. 21)

"The arrival of the *duende* presupposes a radical change to all the old kinds of form, brings totally unknown and fresh sensations, with the qualities of a newly created rose, miraculous, generating" (1933/2007, para. 28).

"The *duende's* arrival always means a radical change in forms. It brings to old planes unknown feelings of freshness, with the quality of something newly created" (1998, p. 50).

"…no emotion is possible unless duende comes" (p. 52); or "…emotion is impossible without the arrival of the *duende"* (1933/2007, para. 22)

"All the arts are capable of *duende*, but where it naturally creates most space, as in music, dance and spoken poetry for these arts require a living body to interpret them, being forms that are born and die, perpetually, and open their contours against an exact present" (1933/1998, p. 54, and 1933/2007)

An In/appropriate Cadenza Comes at Three in the Morning
(ostinato, to be chanted aloud)

It is in/appropriate
to be awake at three o'clock in the morning
calming a whirring mind
with pencil and paper
that turns out to be improvising your dissertation—
your mate a slumbering spoon
and the cat purring under your chin
by the light of the near-full moon…

Lessons in becoming-in/appropriate; in/appropriate lessons

It is in/appropriate
to be silent
in the half-light, to listen
to your fragile breathing—
conceding the narrowing fissure between
your in-breath
and the world's out-breath
It is in/appropriate
to turn this attention to the almost imperceptible
into a gasp—an intention—
a prayer at the heart of your enquiry
— *orenda*[156] before dawn
It is in/appropriate
to be loud and worrisome
when propriety otherwise keeps
unjust power comfortable—
to deviate from the norm
trouble the waters
It is in/appropriate
to curse the darkness, cry in public

Every year more than 2 million American turtles are torn from their lives in the wild and shipped to Asia to be turned into soup or stuck into an aquarium.
(Center for Biological Diversity, n.d.)

[156] See page 213-214.

to rage against the machine and
the dying of the light—
to be naked in your rage and sorrow
It is in/appropriate
to grieve openly, to weep
for the oblivion of species lost—
the Slender-billed curlew,
Pyrenean Ibex
Caspian Tiger—
lost cultures, tongues—
Catawban, Gaguju, Eyak—
innocence lost
It is in/appropriate
to curl up on your classroom floor
in a ball and wail for the warming world
and call it your lesson
It is in/appropriate
to moon the KKK, the CIA
howl at the moon at midnight
to count thirteen moons as a calendar year—
Snow, Worm, Strawberry, Harvest, Hunter's…
(while most are deceived into thinking,
by the sun's rule)
It is in/appropriate
to vomit or bleed
on the Scantron sheets
to stray outside the bubbles
to make them appear as tide-turning phases
in/appropriate to doodle
in the margins, to mark
more than one good answer
or none
It is in/appropriate
to show emotion
muddle reason with feeling
to use the subjective I
the subjunctive mood—in/appropriate
to re/envision a subjective We
that is greater than us

Young speakers of Native American languages, as recently as the 1960s, were punished for speaking their native languages at boarding schools (Woodbury, n.d.).

"According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration snow cover on land in June in the northern hemisphere has been decreasing at a rate of nearly 20 percent per decade since 1979" (Whitlock, 2014).

In Ume Sami [indigenous people of northern Sweden] "there are at least 100 known words to describe snow, how it acts, and even how it may act in the future." There are fewer that 50 people who understand Ume Sami (Young, 2014).

It is in/appropriate
to be too serious, too sensitive
in/appropriate to be a woman or womanly
to not be serious enough
or man-enough—
to take yourself too seriously,
or not take yourself seriously enough
It is in/appropriate
to dally, to dawdle, to linger, to pause
to take more than the allotted time
to lose your way
on purpose or not
It is impractical (and therefore in/appropriate)
to take or (god forbid) major in Art
music or dance
theatre or English or anthropology
philosophy is old school
forget history
Science rules when it's not denied
It is inadvisable
to become a teacher
(especially if you are inclined to be in/appropriate
or philosophical)
Recess is now officially in/appropriate
and so is play for that matter
(it's so damn *inefficient*, and messy too)
laughter, especially belly-natured,
or Buddha-natured, is in/appropriate
It is in/appropriate
to cast yourself as class clown
to skip down the hall
to sit down in the offices
of administrators
or the halls of legislatures in protest
in/appropriate
to mock authority
act the fool
It is in/appropriate
to love your subject so passionately
that you refuse to take the test

An elephant is killed every 15 minutes for its ivory. Elephants, who have thrived for 50 million years in the forests and grasslands of Africa, could be 'extinct within 12 years', according to Nairobi National Park, conservationist Dr. Dame Daphne Sheldrick (Ingham, 2013). *These majestic animals are regularly killed using machine guns from helicopters* (**Burke,** 2013).

A total of 86 elephants — including 33 pregnant females and 15 young — were killed in Chad last week. The 50 or so… poachers shot the animals with machine guns while riding on horses, then hacked out their tusks and left the animals to die. …The money from this illegal ivory trade is possibly being used to fund armed groups (Welsh, 2013).

in/appropriate to aspire
to wilderness
and beauty
to dream
It is in/appropriate
to love your specimen
feel its pain
mourn its demise
set its captive body free
Idealism is definitely in/appropriate
the romantic mind is too *inefficient*
as it strays into barely imagined worlds—
too prone to brooding and heartbreak
for leadership to enforce rules, to keep
steady the illusion that the ship
is not hopelessly lost at sea
It is *inefficient* (and therefore must be in/appropriate)
to walk to school, in/appropriate
to have earth caked on your boots ‘cause you walked
like poor Louise regularly did in third grade
it’s in/appropriate to take off your boots
when you get there
to have holes in your socks
for others to see the skin of your need
It is in/appropriate
to stop payments on the student debt
you cannot afford
to refuse to pay all interest and fines
opting instead to give to the homeless
veteran on the steam vent
by the library
It is in/appropriate
to stray from straight rows facing north
to cast the circle
sit on the floor,
to arrange the chairs in a circle—
even more in/appropriate
to leave chairs encircled for the next class
It is in/appropriate
to light a candle in the circle’s center,

“The largest living organisms on the planet, the big, old trees that harbour and sustain countless birds and other wildlife, are dying” (Global Justice Ecology Project, 2012).

There is mounting evidence to suggest that the structure of childhood is eroding and children are suffering from serious physical, emotional and social deficits directly related to consumerism (Hill, 2011, p. 347).

For the first time in at least 50 years, a majority of U.S. public school students come from low-income families, according to a new analysis of 2013 federal data, a statistic that has profound implications for the nation (Layton, 2015)

to say a prayer to your god
to no particular god or to the earth
to be reverent or irreverent
to refuse to compete
It is in/appropriate
to Om with two dozen students—
to make the windows of the studio
rattle with a concerted vibration
like they did that time at Watauga
(as this is highly in/appropriate
would it happen today?)
It is in/appropriate
to curse the darkness again
louder this time and with stronger language still
to fling open your classroom or office window
(if it opens at all)
and shout *I'm mad as hell*
and I'm not going to take it anymore!
It is in/appropriate
to take your child hiking
along the Blue Ridge
on testing day
in search of the once abundant
Monarch—feeding on the milk of *Asclepias*—
now rare as
the *god of healing*
is the answer to any question
on the test
she is not missing
It is in/appropriate
to refuse to administer the test
to incite enchantment, animate
imagination—to conjure stories
to sing and dance and drum
It is in/appropriate
to shun
technology for graphite and chalk
to smash all screens
for a window open
to the magic and mystery of thin air

Monarch butterflies…have declined by more than 90 percent in under 20 years. During the same period it is estimated that these once-common iconic orange and black butterflies may have lost more than 165 million acres of habitat — an area about the size of Texas — including nearly a third of their summer breeding grounds. … [Their widespread decline] is driven by the massive spraying of herbicides on genetically engineered crops, which has virtually eliminated monarch habitat… (Xerces Society, 2014).

"An estimated 75 to 100 red wolves roam across eastern North Carolina—the world's only wild population of red wolves. The animals have helped restore natural balance to the area … by picking off sick and weak prey, from deer to rabbits. But the red wolf may be in trouble again. NC's Wildlife Resources Commission has asked the federal government to end its reintroduction program and to remove the wolves from private land…" (Howard, 2015, para. 3-4)

It is in/appropriate
to deviate from standard procedure
alter prescribed formatting rules for
aesthetic reasons
use incomplete sentences
digress from your thesis
pause for the cause
It is in/appropriate
to write in the margins
to expose your marginalia
to the world
reveal your longing
It is in/appropriate (and highly *inefficient*)
to ask questions too big
too impossible to answer
too personal
too existential
It is in/appropriate
to roam through the forest naked alone
be present to passing clouds overhead
or to the fog rolling in, falling snow
to sit all day by the bay (or bay window)
wasting time
It is in/appropriate (and oh-so *inefficient*)
to waste *valuable* time
to study the unsanctioned
the officially frivolous
the un/provable
or unprofitable
It is *inefficient* and therefore in/appropriate
to gaze into the rising sea
or the hazed-dimmed starry night
in wonder and awe—still
at the miracle of existence
and the vastness of space—
knowing this wondering and amazement
is certain to
break your heart
open

[On my trip to Borneo in 2007],"I saw acre after acre of once-pristine rainforests… transformed into barren moonscapes; rivers devoid of life and polluted by palm oil effluent and heavy metals; orphaned baby orangutans whose mothers were killed in palm oil plantations as agricultural pests"
(Callery, 2015).

Just once a year, four top French chefs want to be able to do this: Capture individuals of the locally endangered songbird, the tiny ortolan, *force-feed the birds, drown them in Armagnac, pluck, roast and serve them to diners who first place a linen napkin over their heads and then eat the birds — delicate bones and all — in a single, feet-first bite. // The napkin … is draped over the head to preserve the aromas of the bird and, some believe, to hide from God.*
(Onion*, 2014)

**A person's name, not the satirical,* The Onion

It is in/appropriate
to sob over your findings
become-involved
to love your participants
feed your committee
become entangled in relationships—
to become-in/defensible
impassioned yet
unattached to outcomes
It is in/appropriate
to write your dissertation
in improvised verse to be chanted, upheld
as a lamentation,
a small litany for vespers
an evocation or a provocation
It is in/appropriate
to sing data with *duende*—
your weeping and keening
revealing deep wells of
love and affection
in resonant overtones
of in/appropriate hope

It is in/appropriate
to advise
becoming-in/appropriate

These are a few of my findings
lessons learned
and offered.

10 December 2014

Coda: Concluding-Without-Ending in the Middle of Love and Grief

Love Letters in a Time of Mass Extinction

> It's not easy to see things in the middle, rather than looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right to left: try it, you'll see that everything changes. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, p. 25),

My few concluding-but-not-final reflections on our quest are written in the spirit of epistolary poems[157]—to include thoughts about this work's scholarly and more-than-scholarly contributions, as well as possible lines of flight to follow from the enclosure of these pages. In order, these letter-poems are addressed to you, Dear Reader; to my committee; to my participants; to my children; and to Thomas.

Dear Reader—Companion re/Searchers,

As I mull toward conclusions, it is a cool, overcast April afternoon. Fog shrouds the mountains. Singular shining beads, remnants of this morning's rain, cling to the barely budding Blueberry. Birds are hushed—except for a lone Cardinal, who is singing heartily about Love, high in the still-winter-bare trees. A faint breeze stirs in the rhododendron thicket—and in the distance, a rock crusher jars the air—ominously, oblivious to the æffects of its insatiable hunger.

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[157] Epistolary poems (Epistle, 2014), "from the Latin "epistula" for "letter," are, quite literally, poems that read as letters. As poems of direct address, they can be intimate and colloquial or formal and measured. The subject matter can range from philosophical investigation to a declaration of love to a list of errands, and epistles can take any form, from heroic couplets to free verse" (para. 1).

As I imagine you now—having waded and wandered all this way with me—braving, at times, wild and white-water text—navigating rough ecotonic terrain, bearing the dissonant and lonesome notes that are the spiritual frictions of vanishing forms—feeling the heat—deviating through dreamy fields of intimacy and tenderness, contemplating depths of intensity to match the gravity of ruin—listening for the bittersweet notes of Love and Grief—perhaps, like I, you are feeling, curiously, concurrently suspended and animated, in-between hope and hopelessness. This, it seems, is a fitting place to rest—for now. We must better learn to live with and in paradox.

In reviewing our work to get to this interval of closure, let's consider what of significance might be left in the wake of our movements, especially for researchers. Most significantly perhaps, we must consider our alchemical, transpositional method/ology—a hermeneutic of becoming—drawing from eco- and process-relational philosophies—that has involved and blended elements of a variety of both established and experimental methods and methodologies, none of which alone, I believe, could have adequately addressed our quest/ion, nor given rise to results as dynamic and generative. Apart from the very act of asking the question itself—our pausing to consider education in a time of mass extinction resulting from the fractured human—*homo fractus*—I believe it is our method/ology, which largely emerged with the questing itself—a dependent co-arising—that is possibly this work's most noteworthy contribution to scholarship, generally. Specifically, the work both exemplifies methodological practice for nomadic and process-relational theories, and applies nomadic, process-relational theory towards educational/leadership and expressive-arts fields.

A hermeneutics of becoming as applied to our question is, of course—by its very nature—irreplicable, as all data co-arises with embodied and embedded conditions, attitudes,

feelings, affections, sensations and decisions of the researcher/s—often in relationship to those of the researched. Also, in a sense, its work is never truly complete, for while it leaves in its tracks suggestions of meaning and for thinking/doing and thinking/doing differently—it is also already arriving at the next prehending move—making new World—making the World anew.

In our particular case of discerning meaning in a time of mass extinction, I believe the emergent nature of our methodology made it most appropriate for our question—while also holding and exemplifying partial answers to our quest/ion. And, so, in this way, our method of investigation itself has held a meaningful response to what we've been investigating—an idea which inverts/compliments Gadamer's (by way of Smith, 1991) recognition that, as we earlier noted, "it is not possible to establish correct method for inquiry independently of what one is inquiring into. This is because what is being investigated itself holds part of the answer concerning how it should be investigated" (p. 198). As an un-*reproductive* methodology, then, grounded in love and desire, and including attention to the unconscious, a hermeneutics of becoming offers creative and imaginal epistemological spaces for creative insight, as well as methods for both proliferation and integration. Its benefit includes its endlessly generative potential.

Times of mass extinction call for methodological riskiness—as we search for new ways of thinking, doing, behaving, writing, teaching, and making—of living—differently. While this riskiness will take different forms depending on the nature of any given research question and circumstances of the researcher and the researched, for me, it included rethinking formal limitations to the dissertation itself. I believe I/we have in/appropriately—and hopefully wisely and productively—contributed to the unsettling of research

conventions—just enough to be affirmatively provocative—generative of curiosity, challenging scholarly habits-for-habits-sake—or the sake of machines and dysfunctional institutions—prompting new thought, insight, new sight—encouraging playful experimentation and imagination—and evoking genuine feeling—including a *feeling* for the quest/ion—and with it, a sense of both urgency and possibility. May we all be encouraged and emboldened to continue to scholarly, artistically, pedagogically, and organizationally engage these and other seriously playful methods—i.e., to work/play in the methodological ecotone—autoecographically, a/r/tographically, poetically—hermeneutically-becoming—as we work toward envisioning and transposing research, education and leadership in a time of mass extinction.

I believe a process-relational paradigm for research (education and leadership) has great potential, and I am excited to engage and extend it through and for further studies—especially by way of collaborative projects. I am interested to further explore with other researchers (and artists, writers, teachers and leaders) how a hermeneutics of becoming might be applied to other questions, and am especially interested in questing more deeply into some of the themes—also holding new method/ological potential—that emerged over the course of the enquiry. Consider, for example:

- The conscious cultivation of ethical, liminal educational spaces, and poietic and imaginal educational and leadership practices such as Art-making, questing, dream-sharing, and ritual;
- Refinement and furthering of Bohmian dialogue as research method (to be considered alongside and integrated with other dialogic theory);

- Further theoretical application to research methodologies of Gregory Bateson's ideas of the ecology of mind and patterns that connect;
- Leaning into the Arts to facilitate and enhance co-emergence, and to facilitate the identification and creation of/with patterns that re/connect;
- The further articulation, integration, and application of nomadic, process-relational philosophies—including ecophilosophies—with/to expressive arts theory;
- Use of intermodal expressive arts with research subjects as data-generative methods;
- Interrogation and revitalization of old and creation of new language, symbols and forms as we attempt to think, write, speak, teach, and otherwise communicate and learn in both imaginal, nomadic, and process-relational ways;
- Further experimentation with and development of the autoecographic method;
- Exploration and cultivation of the radical imagination, and transdisciplinary and methodological ecotones;
- Collective re/imagining and embodiment of a We that is greater than us (to supplant ideological individualism), including a re/imagined and re/vitalized eco-cultural commons;
- Establish informal and formal dialogue with indigenous elders/teachers—beginning with an invitation to them (grounded in humility and reparative intent) to teach and advise Western leaders and educators about ways to transpose a misguided, destructive worldview—and ways of working together for healing present and future generations, which lead to—
- The dreaming and envisioning of living-with/in, and educating and leading for the Ecozoic era; and

- The æffects of blending several or all of these approaches (and more) toward a cosmically-conscious process-relational project of reinventing the human at the species level—perhaps toward and approximate to the *homo integrans*—the perpetually renewing, restoring, re-creating, integrating and integrated, making whole—becoming-human.

What does it mean to educate, do research and write in a time of mass extinction? This question, now, is y/ours. The "gap" is never filled; we have much work to do.

Cultivating liminality, activating poiesis: for/in your research, in the classroom, and in the conference room.

I have come to understand liminality as a vital condition for *deep education* and *deep scholarship* to occur. The more conscious we can be of this condition—how to know and feel its presence—ways to enter it and/or conjure it—the more we can learn to avail of it for productive, transpositional learning, enquiry, and creativity. I have discussed how liminality is a condition of our times generally, as we live in the in-between of epochal biospheric and cultural shifting on a planetary scale. We live in/with this condition and are affected by it whether conscious of it or not. (And it's better, of course, to be conscious of it.) I have also discussed the importance of liminality to my research, and specifically to my research encounter—to our mask-making and dialogue.

Having thought about this condition for education generally, I now understand how I have been living in/through liminal times, in a personal way, for the past five-plus years. For me—becoming-educated, becoming-doctor—is/has been a rite-of-passage—a transpositional process/event. I have been transposed (numerous times) through movement into and through rich discursive and imaginal territory—including the geographies of solitude, emptiness,

doubt, trust, and vulnerability—with the vital guidance and support of mentors, friends and kin for sure—but also via a kind of a solitary quest/ioning—a "vision quest,"[158] if you will, through which I have attempted to both interrogate my own heart/mind in relation to our times and the world—and to enquire with "vision [involving] something more than the eye's capacity for sight" (Martínez, 2004, p. 83). I understand this transitional period of my life, significantly, as a liminal time.

What if each research endeavor was held with intention by the sacred quality of liminality? I like to imagine the kinds of research and method/ologies for researchers that might be produced in universities where liminal space/time was consciously recognized and cultivated, and where rituals, for instance, were named, designed and enacted for students and faculty to discover their research vocations, consonant with the needs of a world in crisis.

Additionally, the practice of such sacred research, as it were, might include the following suggestions:

- Consciously engage with the *hurry up and slow down* paradox; cultivate presence, refuse to speed;
- Don't panic when you get lost—instead look around for clues in the shadows;
- Practice the Aikido of enquiry—that is, learn to turn your heart/thought movements in ways that redirect the momentum of any encountered *potestas* (coercive, destructive power) to *potentia* (creative, productive life-force); becoming-in/appropriate is sometimes key to this practice;

[158] I obviously use the term "vision quest" metaphorically—respecting that I in no way can claim to have experienced the profound ritualized rite-of-passage process of certain Native American cultural and religious traditions—however much I wish and believe such formalized rites-of-passage traditions could/would positively inform and influence our approach to education in a time of mass extinction. But this is a topic for another paper.

- Practice the *tantric flip* (related to the Aikido of enquiry, but not just the same), which helps keep a balanced perspective of grief, anger, fear, emptiness, etc.;
- Always consider æffects and æffectiveness of your research;
- Listen to and discern dreams, synchronicities and intuitions;
- Spend time in/by/with and seek encounters with, for instance, forests, deserts, oceans, starry skies, plants, animals, and silence; listen for and attend their instruction; and
- Dance, make Art, and make Love, be attentive to desire-without-lack.

Furthermore, if you find you've become powerless to æffect destructive policies, there are times and situations you must consider superseding them; i.e., becoming-in/appropriate. Ideally, find like-minded souls and become-in/appropriate, in fluid-solidarity, in ethical, nonviolent community.

Above all, Dear Reader—remembering with me that *the dream drives the action*—and as I allow myself to project my own dreams—imagine a world in which humans in the Ecozoic era are educated from birth to consciously relate, respond to and celebrate the world as it actually is—cosmogenic, endlessly renewing/creative, multiple, abundant, generous, wondrous, interconnected, beauty-filled, and, at the same time infinitely, gloriously mysterious. There is something to be said for befriending Mystery—letting the Moving Mysterious be/come and become-revealed—in part, through our creative deeds—that is one of our most important tasks. Intrinsic to all our endeavours are uncertainty and impermanence—or, as I've heard it said, "constant change is here to stay."

A generous, celebratory attitude, of course, does not exclude the presence of death, decay, destruction, suffering, or limits—all part of Mystery—and creation. While our true freedom and full embrace and experience of life and love includes these inevitable processes

that lead to grief, I wholeheartedly believe an educational and leadership ethos orientated by a process-relational ontology, epistemologies, and methodologies would *greatly* reduce human-induced destruction and suffering in the world—while at the same time better equip us for letting go—especially of fear—and for grieving artfully, lovingly, soulfully, wisely—and together. Perhaps at this historical juncture, it is this latter process of letting go and grieving wisely together that shall serve us most of all, in a time of mass extinction.

But back to our dreaming together… What if we could let go of the fear of uncertainty and change that has us clasping and clinging white-knuckled to *unbecoming* ways that we now know are literally destroying life and diminishing Life—leading to mass extinction? What if instead we marshalled our imaginative and creative energies toward manifesting the Ecozoic era—a world of mutually enhancing relations among humans and the larger community of life? What if we empathetically and courageously hitched all of our leading, research, and teaching to our imagination and dreams for a better, more consciously-connected world—declining to have our energies and purposes chained to what we have been told is inevitable, or necessary, "practical," or profitable (for maintenance of the status quo—or toward the equally doomed Technozoic era). This embodiment and embedding of the dream-driving-the-action is the creative activity and practice of the in/appropriate.

This, too, is the exciting, Great Work for which Berry (1999) and others have called. By embracing process-relationality—as integral to a functional cosmology with the story of the universe itself as its basis (Berry, 1988)—we would align ourselves and our educational practices and all that unfolds from them with the radically shifted paradigm that twentieth-century science revealed and initiated—but which we have failed, as yet, to culturally integrate. It is past time—it is *now time*—for all serious leaders, researchers, and educators *to*

embrace, *shift with—lead, enquire and teach from and towards*—this meta-paradigm that is comprehended and articulated in contemporary scientific and philosophical understandings of our universe as a process-relational event—and "a communion of subjects not a collection of objects" (e.g., Berry, 1999) (an understanding which also happens to align with the worldviews of many indigenous cultures).

Here, too, is where vigorous transdisciplinary and experimental collaboration is needed—first in the academy—as an acute-care response to our educational emergency in a time of mass extinction. Imagine, for example, scientists, philosophers, theologians, farmers, Artists, and others coming together to prepare, present and enact cross-field experiential teaching/learning events meant to address and broadcast by way of exemplification the exciting possibilities this approach offers our time of *multiple cascading crises*. Turn all our classrooms and conference rooms into labs for emergent/emergency dreaming, imagining, making and practicing—towards an Ecozoic era.

While I can hear the voices of admonition—including accusations of naiveté, irresponsibility, or even perhaps sedition—I respond with the only reasonably certain knowledge I have—and that is, our collective multispecies undoing will be sure if we stay our current course. It is from this relative certainty that I prescribe the need to dream and dream big—and think and do differently. Clearly, business-as-usual—in education, research, leadership and other socio-cultural and political realms—is truly the *inappropriate* approach for our times. The Great Turning—as Joanna Macy calls our collective mid-transpositional movement toward an uncertain future—what we all hope will be a Life-affirming and sustaining meta-paradigm—calls for big dreams and risky-while-ethical educational and research behaviors.

It is on this final, hopefully long-reverberating note, Dear Reader—while making a broad call for dreaming and *Arting* the future into the present—in part through creative works of research, leading, educating and living—expanding our attentions and devotions beyond world-limiting ways of knowing, doing, and becoming—that I also make the by-now obvious point that our in/appropriate questing and dissertation does not narrowly lead to firm pragmatic implications or neat solutions. Rather, it makes a path and extends an invitation to the *Coeur de Lion,* the heart of the Lion (Hillman, 1999), the place and attitude of com/passionate enquiry and transpositional pedagogy—which calls upon contiguity, courage, trust, strength, and potentia—while knowing no separation between subject and object, nature and culture, or thinking, feeling and doing together. Here's leading to the Great Paradox, with radical trust, adventurous spirit—and also, importantly…

With Rhizomatic Love and Wonder,

Susan

Dear Committee,

In searching for words to conclude-without-ending, I return to beginnings in the middle of Love and Grief—to the initiation of becoming-researcher, becoming-doctor. Near to six years since I began coursework, it was a hot Wednesday afternoon in August, with my cohort of nine intrepid colleagues and two professors—then unknown to me, but whom I would come to deeply love and respect. Together we launched enthusiastically into Research Methodologies and a multidisciplinary seminar—our focus, education and social class.

For the next two years, Wednesday evenings were to become ritualized by these and other classes. In retrospect, I hadn't a clue what I was getting myself into. From a casual, conscious perspective, I somewhat naively saw this next educational step as a mere

retooling—a knowledge, skill and credential upgrade that could possibly lead me back into the formal workforce fold, after several years of "informal work" (in a callous economy where nurturing and caring are not respected as formal work—not efficient producers of profit in dollars).

Instead, I found myself on a labyrinthine journey—that would take me deep into *where-there-be-dragons* territory—including forays underground—where I have since wandered, gotten lost in dark viney thickets, reached for the light, been deceived by mirages, shadows, turned inside-out, and befriended—mind you, not slain—dragons. Near to coming out the other side of a profound sort of rite-of-passage, I am changed—many times transposed. There is no way that I could have foreseen or imagined the journey that would unfold.

It was around the time that coursework was drawing to a close—nearly four years since—that we—the four of you and I—first assembled to discuss possibilities for this research project—which I can imagine you each took on with a certain trepidation, knowing what a thoroughly impossible question had chosen me—chosen us—while also, on the one hand, having some inkling of my Turtle-nature—and, on the other—knowing—but perhaps not fully—my proclivity for the expansive, the rhizomatic, the long-wandering, the cosmic….

I hope you know how deeply I appreciate your each having said a heartening "Yes"—and, then, for your trusting that, indeed, *the dream drives the action*….

Do you remember my dream, in which you sat around my oblong white-clothed dining table? I was supposed to have lunch ready for you, but didn't. I wondered about calling out for sandwiches (sustainable tuna!)—take-away—and then I collected them

without your noticing. I was quite embarrassed by the whole affair—about not having a proper meal prepared—with the cupboards rather bare, so there was not much to work with. And the house was untidy.

And then I discovered the enormous and thickly woven spider web, spanning the underside of the table—where, in waking life and later that day, you sat. Underneath, too, was Ms. Spider, busily spinning and weaving—spinning and weaving. Before my eyes she morphed into a dark and awesome creature, with no (apparent) ears. She looked at me intently, ferociously, and I thought she might attack. She frightened me. And, so, here we are, now….

With your invaluable encouragement and guidance, I believe I have "undergone" something of the "Deep Education," of which Craig Chalquist (2014) speaks as probing through "appearances, surfaces, and customary explanations—the 'natural attitude' noted by phenomenology—to explore the motifs, images, collective fantasies, and other … forces moving in the personal and cultural unconscious" (para. 2). The deep approach to education, Tochan (2010) says, is to seek "a fundamental change in the dominant worldview and social structure of modernity" (p. 4); it "is never fully achieved, it is always in the making" (p. 2).

I hope and believe that this dissertation contributes to new perspectives for Deep Education and Transpositional Research to widen and deepen the deceptively/dangerously myopic worldview that has taken us to the proverbial cliff's edge. I believe it at least points in new directions—especially methodological ones—for education, research, and leadership that, if nothing else, models and encourages the radical imagination, collaborative and creative risk-taking and experimentation with new modes of knowing, valuing, being and becoming—which notably honor æffective, embodied practices; intuition and the

unconscious; and transdisciplinary, dialogic, imaginal, aesthetic and poietic processes.

Reflecting back on the difficult phases—the dreamy Spiders, scary morphing creatures—terrifying heights, negotiating spans wider than my reach, slippery icy surfaces and desolate or exploding cities—I am prompted to assert that transpositional research—like a spiritual quest—is best undertaken with an expectation that the research journey will take the searcher/seeker through at least a few dark forests and valleys of shadows—including of death—the dying and re-visioning of worn beliefs, perspectives, habits, attitudes, and values. Transpositional education/research requires the cultivation of letting go, while also seeing/making/receiving the world anew—for eternal perishing, in a process-relational sense, is always also generative, creative. Imagine what might become if our limited and limiting epistemological and educational habits of reduction, standardization, permanence, efficiency, accountancy, individualism, competition, strict rationality, predetermined outcomes, and fear (of failure and then death) were replaced….

Imagine grounding such values of all our teaching, leading, learning and becoming—in relationship, connection, empathy, possibility, play, wonder, creativity, respect, joy, beauty, Mystery and Love. What if our *bottom line*—our *standards of measure*—our *maximum benefits*—our expected *outcomes*—were not defined by death-dealing profits in dollars—but the abundant profits of multi-species communal well-being and –becoming?

A conclusion-without-ending-without-gratitude would be cause for despair. And so a deep thanks to you, Dear Committed Ones, for your generative *amor mentoris*—for your scholarly advice and wise counsel; your tolerance, resilience, patience and impatience; your belief in the project and in me; for your understanding and *feeling* for the question, as well as for the necessity of "answering" its urgency processually, aesthetically, artfully; for your

fierce and tender teacherly- and collegial-love that challenged and nurtured, urged and encouraged, questioned and sustained through even the difficult times; and, especially, perhaps, for your full embrace of the in/appropriate.

A deep bow in each of four directions...

With Transpositional Love and Gratitude,

Susan

Dear Participants,

This is, perhaps, the hardest of my closing letters to write, but a necessary one. In wondering how to address you by way of conclusion, to honor and thank you for your vital part in this project—I come first not to thoughts per se, but, again, to feelings of a barely namable affection, deep in the heartmind—that "organ of aesthetic perception" (Hillman, 1981, p. 46)—that I believe is so imperative—yet largely untouched by educational or leadership theorists.

I have hardly known how to write about *it*, and *it* stumps me every time I try. We are so unused to talking or writing about *it*—yet *it* seems so vital to this work—this art/work of educating in a time of mass extinction. (*It* seems missing almost all together from the literature.)

This *it* is the feeling—the phenomenon—I have named in Movement Four (yes, perhaps awkwardly) *amor mentoris*—that, to me, is nearly inseparable from—or derivative of *amor mundi*—the love of the world—and, surely, what Levinas meant when he spoke of the *wisdom of love*— conflating the love of wisdom that is philosophy.

It was *amor mentoris* from which sprang the idea of our research encounter—to gather you all together from an array of disciplines for an adventurous dialogue; I also like to believe that this *amor mentoris* was, at some level, the source of your affirmative response to the invitation. Of course, I can't say for sure—though I can say I have *no* doubt that your generous and enthusiastic responses—if not, also, in at least a couple of instances, skeptical ones—did indeed arise from *amor mundi,* because I've known its profound expression in each of you.

I can also be sure that I felt this Love—both *amor mentoris* and *amor mundi*—"the thought of the heart" (Hillman, 1981)—infused in and expressed by the liminal space of our encounter; in the silence and banter of our poietic mask-making; and as that which animated our dialogue—including as presence at the dinner table where communion and conversation continued into the evening. It has been and is my intent to translate and arouse *amor mentoris* and *amor mundi* in and through this work. This is the Love that *duende* sings, and is summoned by *orenda.*

I believe *Amor mentoris*—this barely nameable and too rarely talked-about affection—is seated/seeded in the *Coeur de Lion,* the medieval conception recovered by James Hillman (1981), who thinks it is especially important to redeem for our times—for it is the *heart of the Lion* that recognizes the desert, the ugly, the banal, evil (p. 64)—mass extinction and climate catastrophe—and it is the *roar of the Lion* that awakens and "provokes" the heart's aesthetic response to the world. "Crucial to the lion is that it *believes,*" says Hillman*, "*and it believes that it does not think. So its thought appears in the world as project, desire, concern, mission. Thinking and doing together" (p. 11).

Perhaps there is nothing more urgent for the work of educational philosophers, researchers, practitioners and leaders than to waken the *Coeur de Lion* in themselves/ourselves and their/our students—and to forcefully, loudly—in/appropriately—roar. The beauty and integrity of our world—and our deep—albeit too often repressed—grief in beauty's diminishment and absence—should provoke us to respond imaginally to the world in crisis. Love and grief "must be raged or outraged into life," says Hillman (p. 64)—and it is done from the heart.

I know in my deepest heartmind that this should be a high priority for educators and education researchers in a time of mass extinction—and perhaps the only thing that can save us now—from ourselves. We need to talk and enquire seriously about Love—the heart's aesthetic and compassionate response to the world—and the alchemical processes whereby *amor mundi* generates *amor mentoris*, which generates *amor mundi.* How do we best actively encourage and nourish this dependent co-arising of affections in a time of mass extinctions. I've suggested that we multiply and intensify *amor mundi* while practicing *amor mentoris,* and cultivate *amor mentoris* by teaching and leading from the *Coeur de Lion*—fierce lover of the World. As far as I can tell, there is a real need for research into how this Love can be more consciously cultivated.

On a final and important note to you, Dear Participants, I also want to briefly sing-up here the tensions that can arise—when multiple paradigms, philosophies, personalities, and intellectual and aesthetic styles meet, mingle and sometimes collide—by way of a collaborative transdisciplinary endeavor and encounter. More importantly, I want to recognize how these tensions can be critically productive when considered in the realm of process-relational, nomadic scholarship—not as competing intellectual cultures jockeying for

dominance by way of "correct" thinking and method, etc.—but as complementary and co-responding approaches to the "multiple cascading crises" (Jensen, 2013) we face. I felt some of these tensions in our group during our encounter on May third—not in any overt or conflicting ways, but I was aware of them—their subtle presence—and I believe they were, in fact, productive tensions in the context of our encounter. I like to think our art-making in community, followed by our rhizomatic approach to dialogue helped to transpose these tensions in creative and in/appropriate ways.

I know these tensions well, you see, because they reside and negotiate within me: the critical theorist who is troubled by power and privilege and who might also think the Imaginal and Liminal is horse hockey we've no time to even consider; the political economist who has no time for making art (and the artist who actually wishes she knew Marx much better than she does and is thankful she knows who to go to when she has questions); the phenomenologist who both enjoys and is pained by sensing the world and who relishes experiencing and sharing with others *Lebenswelt* or Lifeworld and *Dasein*—"being there"; the postmodernist who thinks the phenomenal world cannot be trusted; the Rationalist who is quick to dismiss the Intuitive and the Intuitive who is quick to dismiss the Rationalist; the Idealist and the Pragmatist; the feminist who still hasn't enough say with the overly-talkative man in the room and the man who thinks the feminist misreads his intentions; the poet who is tired of talking about power and wants to retreat in solitude; the theologian and the atheist; the recluse and the activist; the psychologist who sees the potential of therapies to address issues for which the critical theorist sees only political solutions; and then, of course, there is the jaded psychologist and the nihilistic philosopher, who see little way out because we are all so seriously screwed up from childhood—including by abusive educational systems—we

are beyond therapeutic reach and doomed to ennui—and/or violence. There are others. We need them all. I think you probably get the picture. They all reside within and around me—not always comfortably side by side, but neither should they, especially. Thankfully, the process-relational philosopher, the nomadic theorist, and expressive artist dare to dwell in the in-between, are pretty good translators and negotiators, and true therapists who are adept at looking for treasures in ruins. Together, they keep us talking to one another, creating together, and the infighting is mostly courteous!

A deep bow in multiple entangled directions—

With an In/appropriately Unruly Roar,

Susan

Dear Oisín and Rhiannon—and *All the Children*—

You were just ten and fourteen years old when I began at fifty, in love and grief, this doctoral program. (We were all grieving.) Oisín, you were just beginning high school (ninth grade), and Rhiannon, you were beginning sixth grade. Your ol' mama didn't much know what she was getting herself into then, and I certainly didn't stop to think that you would be finishing up your sophomore year in college and nearing your last year in high school when I would conclude (without ending). I know you both think I am a bit daft to have made this journey. I sense your thinking: *Why for Pete's sake would you want six more years of* school *and to write all those papers—especially the long one? Get a job!*

While, above all, celebrating all that you have become in the intervening years, I also want to recognize here the part in me that is sorry and sorrowful for not having been more attentive to your growing-up while being so focused on this project. But then I also think that

no matter what work I had been doing you would have grown up too fast, I would have failed to notice the subtler changes of your becoming through adolescence, and I'd still be wondering where the time went. Such is process under our noses!

But while I have certain regrets about my distractions and/or inattentions—surrounded by towers of books, glued to the computer screen for too many hours, and/or ill with the gravity of my subject-matter—perhaps not enough talks or walks or laughs, or hugs at the right time—I also want to recognize and let you know how much you are a part of this work, and that my love for you—that is really inseparable from my love for the World—infuses each and every word. You—the whole of your generation and the generations to come—have been foremost in my heartmind all along the way—as I consider—grieve and love—our toxic, warming world—our time of mass extinction—along with all the beauty and loveliness and creative possibilities of the world into which we invited and welcomed you.

Ultimately, my/our work between—and hopefully spilling from—these covers is a small but sincere attempt to sway the collective dream—especially through education—to help imagine and evoke the Ecozoic era—a world that will not only sustain you and your children, etc. with *enough*—as in sustainable *sufficiency*—but a world in which you will also joyfully and creatively reside and thrive—at peace, and with justice, interconnection, fulfilling work, integrity, pleasure, and beauty abound—for all. I still want to believe—I dream—we can defy, repair and transpose forces of destruction—which can so easily take up residence within us—so that we might never arrive at the Age of Loneliness—and that your World-becoming is one mutually shared with an abundance of multiple cultures and creatures—including plenty of elephants, tigers, otters, whales, Lady Slippers, sea turtles, cranes, orangutans, wolves, and vultures.

And so, among the many things I would like to convey to you here, in a time of mass extinction, I want to very briefly draw attention to just two things, for now. One is about *becoming-We*—and the other, *hope and hoping*. I believe these two things are connected.

Reprise: becoming-We.

It is in/appropriate … to re/envision a subjective We // that is greater than us…

One of the greatest and most harmful fictions (in the sense of falsehood) that permeates our society—and educational culture—is that we are autonomous, self-ish beings, competing against one another for a small-and-shrinking (and often poisoned) piece of pie. The conditioning towards competition among so-called individuals takes many forms—and accelerates in schools—such as in testing, grading, selection/exclusion, compliance/deviance, promotion/demotion, admission/rejection, etc. This soul-destroying fiction includes the story of Responsibility—a narrow idea of responsibility—that is, for your self, and mostly your self, alone (if not your immediate family). If you work hard and "play by the rules" (which you are told are neutral and not rigged), your will get your pie. The harder you "work" (as defined by corporate/capitalist culture—to "produce"), the bigger your slice of the shrinking pie (which will be smaller or non-existent for those who do not "work" as hard). For those who don't "succeed," it is their fault because they've not worked hard enough or played by the rules. You have heard things like "the early bird gets the worm," and "compete to get ahead," because you don't want to be "left in the dust." If you want to be "happy" (as defined by having lots of money/Stuff and "freedom from Want"), you must comply with this false, divisive, and destructive narrative. Individualism is related also to the story of Dominion/Domination—so that those who have the most money/Stuff—and therefore power-over those without—are the ones who get to make and enforce the rules.

The story is false, even if it is powerful. It is called Individualism—Capitalism's twin—or offspring—and it's actually only a relatively recently constructed story that is more about private property and consumption than the wellbeing of people or their places. (Individualism is an ideology dating from the mid-nineteenth century—though the primacy of the self and private property certainly goes back further.)

Individualism is not to be confused with *individuality*. *Individuality* is about multiplicity and diversity—of the myriad creative manifestations of human and more-than-human life that *defy commodification*—while the ideology of Individualism associated with capitalism ironically results in reduced individuality and more conformity. It also makes for broken, disconnected people, broken families and communities, with gross inequality, poverty, violence, and disregard for and alienation from the larger community of Life, of which we are actually part and on which we depend. Ideologies of Individualism and Dominion are also implicated in the categorization, discrimination and oppression of "individuals" according to species, racism, class, gender and ability within systems. *Becoming-We that is greater than us* rejects the deceptions that are Individualism and Dominion, and celebrates our interconnected, emergent and shared-individual co/creative gifts and contributions to the whole.

This, I believe, is the Earth community to which we all truly belong—and long for. The more we can resist and educate to transpose this false ideology of the autonomous and static self—that leads to disconnection, disintegration, and alienation in/from World—the more we can dream back into existence an alternative reality of conspiratorial[159] care,

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[159] *conspire* (v.) late 14c., from Old French conspirer (14c.), from Latin conspirare "to agree, unite, plot," literally "**to breathe together**," from com- "together" (see com-) + spirare "to breathe" (see spirit (n.)).

compassion, cooperation, and the commons—in the more accurate context of our cosmic relatedness. This is one of the most significant things we can do to begin to mend our tattered life-web—to heal our World's brokenness. Bruce Bromley (2009) speaks beautifully of our inherent relational multispecies, multi-thing condition, which the ideology of Individualism rejects—or is blind to:

> …we cannot lay claim to the titular ownership of this intercorporeality because we belong to it, because we survive and perish on account of it, each thing is bound up with, opens on, is endlessly interrelated with, other things, so that the world becomes a web of the relational; so that no thing abides in isolation from other things; so that isolation, like unhampered congress, numbers among our fictions, reprehensible, unavailing, if not wakened to. (p. 230)

Further, Bromley proposes envisioning:

> … an ethics of the intercorporeal, which would argue for the virtues in comprehending that we do not stand alone, fall alone, live, die alone: we are always with respect to the intertwinements of which phenomena are made. To believe otherwise is to beguile others in a dark of our own fabrication, in an obscurity without use, to counter that we must by necessity be mistaken in our objects, even though they are not ours, since we breathe among them. (p. 230)

Hope belongs to a process-relational world.

Hope is the rhythm of loving without climax. (M. C. Richards, 1996, p. 178)

Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are. ~ Augustine of Hippo[160]

In the beginning of this work—in our long-ago First Movement—we were reminded by James Hillman (1998) that only love and "a desire for the world that affords the vitality, the passionate interest in which all other efforts rest" can "stir our depths equal to the depths of ecological need" (p. 266). Becoming-in/appropriate by resisting and transposing false ideologies of Individualism and Dominion begins with leaning into and leading with and from Love and y/our deepest desire for the world—which is also connected to the affirmative and æffectionate view/experience of the World/cosmos as process-relational, creative and enduring. If this sounds *merely* idealistic to you—and therefore "unrealistic" and impossible (because we are also conditioned to completely discount idealism—that is the vision of and commitment to the beautiful and good—as unrealistic and impractical)—how does it work in the context of hope to think about this loving and desiring—and becoming-*We*? Let me think this through and explain….

Hope! Here is another concept so ubiquitous, and yet so very difficult to write about—like Love (or even love)—partly because it's been *hallmarked* into meaninglessness—a sappy, sentimental goop. All along this journey, hope/lessness has shadowed me, called, troubled, vexed, teased, and haunted. And, so I've known since early in this journey that I wanted and needed to think/write about hope.

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[160] From my workshop notes: Racism and Literacy, with Margery Freeman, April 22, 2010, Reich College of Education.

Hope without religion.

Hope without an afterlife.

Radical hope.

While recognizing that *hope in a time of mass extinction* could be its own research topic, this project would seem incomplete without intently gesturing back towards hope's insistent shadowing. The draw to do this comes from various quarters, within and out. In part, it comes from hearing others say, "You must leave your readers with hope"—as I've also heard when teaching about our multiple cascading crises, "You've got to leave your students with hope." It seems especially important to leave my children with something called hope—not hallmarked-hope, but radical hope.

And so—as so often has happened during this research journey—thoughts that seem significant arrive in the dark, at three in the morning. While thinking about how to segue from the theme of Individualism to the theme of hope, the two at first seemed disparate topics. But the more I contemplated how to approach *the space in-between*—with a textual segue from Individualism to hope—the more a relationship between them began to emerge. Explaining this takes us into some tricky textual territory….

First, let's think about what we mean by radical hope—or, maybe first, what is not meant in this invocation of hope. First of all, let's be clear that radical hope is not to be (nor should ever be) confused with optimism. Hope never carries a warranty or guarantee; and it is certainly killed by certitude. Hope is not passive, and while it has vision and often clarity, it eschews firm objectives or goals. Hope is not emotional, nor intellectual. Like desire-without-lack, hope needs to be whispered without being tagged too often with the preposition *for.* (It even occurs to me that desire-without-lack *is* a form of hope.) Like the rainbow set in

the clouds by God as a covenant with "all living creatures of every kind" in the Biblical Genesis (9:15 New International Version), hope is ephemeral and elusive.

All along my research journey, as I have kept my ear to the ground and my eye on horizons for hope, I have listened for others' ruminations about hope. I have heard a variety of perspectives, and have even heard some talk of the dangers of hope—with which, depending on one's understanding, I would agree. Hope that is born of denial, or that is passive, confused with optimism, or entangled with expectations are dangerous forms of hope.

Joanna Macy (2012) writes of two kinds of hope. The first kind she speaks of as involving *hopefulness* (p. 3). But this kind of hope is ultimately disempowering, as those relying on hopefulness tend to only engage energies toward something for which they expect a hopeful outcome. I think of this kind of hope as a twin of cynicism. Both attitudes—hope that is dependent on hopefulness, and cynicism as a response to perceived *hopelessness*—lead to disengagement and despair, or even to behaviors that divert the course further away from an ultimately preferred direction.

Similarly evoking desire-without-lack as we have already done, Joanna Macy writes that the second kind of hope is related to desire—knowing what "we'd like, or love, to take place" for *the kind of world we long for so much it hurts*—adding that it is really "what we do with this hope that really makes the difference" (p. 3).

> Passive hope is about waiting for external agencies to bring about what we desire. Active hope is about becoming active participants in bringing about what we hope for. Active Hope is a practice. Like tai chi or gardening, it is something we *do* rather than *have.* (p. 3)

Similarly, “Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up,” says David Orr (2010):

> In contrast to optimism or despair, hope requires that one actually do something to improve the world. Authentic hope comes with an imperative to act. There is no such thing as passive hope. (p. xix)

Rolling up OUR sleeves, as an act of radical hope, means that we engage our collective will to act on the behalf of our deepest desire for the world. This of course requires the engagement of individual will, but not just for our individual selves—so it is something more than the individual will to survive. As my friend Pete MacDowell reminds me (personal communication, on many occasions), borrowing from Antonio Gramsci*,* radical hope demands the *“*optimism of the will despite the pessimism of the intellect*.”* While the ideology of Individualism is often portrayed as optimistic and it certainly can be willful, it eschews the relatedness necessary for hope. Hope exists in and as relation; it is dependent on empathy inherent in We, and withers without relationship.

And so, radical hope requires that we synchronously engage individual and collective will and vision—perhaps with something of an æffect akin to sympathetic resonance in the physics of sound. Think of musical instruments, for instance—the sitar—whose auxiliary strings respond with their own vibrating harmonic sounds as result of the vibrations of nearby strings. These shared vibrations are the result of embodied relationship—and contribute to and signal a We that is greater than us. The best musicians, attuned to each other and to the vibrations they make, are ready to work together to make make the music exquiste, beautiful, haunting, moving, and sometimes fun to dance to.

Yes, hope can only exist in relationship—and it is this quality that connects us back to the ideology of Individualism, for I do not think hope can exist within such an ideology.

Hope needs a community of relations and it needs the benefit of Deep Time. “It is not enough to conceive of hope to unleash a future,” Megan Craig (2010) says, quoting Levinas (from *Existents and Existence,* p. 91).

> Hope entails more time than that available to any solitary subject. It demands an embodied dimension of ‘fresh air’ (EE 93) and a radically new beginning. … [R]eal hope is possible only in a social world, where, outlived by others, one encounters futures irreducible to the parameters of one’s horizons. (p. 159)

In addition to being relational, hope is also processal. “Hope is always in the process of becoming,” says Deborah Haynes (Richards, 1996), interpreting M. C. Richard’s poem, *7 Musical Etudes on the Theme of Hope*. “Hope emerges out of a perspective that apprehends the ongoing creativity in the universe. But hope is not confidence; it is surrounded by dangers and may well be the consciousness of fragility and contingency” (p. 202).

Even though I know it might seem I’ve gone and gotten too academic for a letter to “my babies,” I hope you’ll know and remember the heart that holds these heady words. One day, I hope you’ll have an experience—many experiences—of *amor mentoris*—teachers to help enlarge what I know you are already awake to and that is growing in you—*amor mundi.* And I hope that you will know *amor mentoris* because you first knew well and then re-member *amor parentis*! “Hope implies a powerful role for memory,” says Haynes. For it is only with a powerful memory of what *was* that we might be called to imagine a different future than the one we seem to be living-ourselves-into” (p. 203).

Love you beyond the moon and back,

Mama Susan

Dear Thomas,

It has been six years since you passed away from this world, just as I was about to launch into my studies, which led to a long and winding journey—a challenge I often wondered if I were truly up to. Your sudden illness delayed our planned visit over lunch on Saturday—and then Death preempted our rescheduled Tuesday appointment. I think of you now—dwelling in stars, comets, supernovas, and planets—scattered among the luminous and dark swirling cosmic dust you loved so much. You have become integral to the Mystery—to the awe and wonder and reverence I feel when I look into night sky. I feel so blessed.

Though there is so much I would like to say—and even more I would like to ask—this final letter needs to be one of simplicity and brevity—one to carry simple but profound gratitude and love—which is so necessary for the movement and becoming of things. I will save and incubate my questions for a love letter-to-become. In time.

For now, thank you.

With *amor mundi*,

Susan

Post Script

The stark reality of mass extinction and climate catastrophe makes incumbent on us all—especially community/educational leaders—a radical reimagining of time and weathering in wholly new—or perhaps just forgotten—ways. This radical reimagining requires us to paradoxically slow down and speed up. To hurry up and slow down already... To get in our leaderly boats and be moved by the winds—and thus to be vulnerable to an unpredictable course—listening all the while for the great cosmic yes! It requires slowing

down enough for desiring with the stars and listening deeply for the urgent prayers of our times—what asks to be done…

Perhaps, yet, in listening deeply, and before we can hear the clear articulation of yes!—we also must reckon with no!— making daily practices of grieving and resistance—to be appropriately inappropriate. It entails recalibrating our lives to the body's rhythms, ocean tides, to seasons (however erratic now), to the patient and faithful movement of the sun and stars and moon, to the flower's blooming and butterfly's meticulous emergence, to meditative breath, to each other's presences and to the presences (and disappearances/ absences) of creaturely-others—to the pace of walking with children and the elderly.

It involves being fully awakened to and the repairing of damages wrought by injustice, and tending the immense suffering in the world, including in our own hearts. We would do this proprioceptive recalibrating—by caring and intently listening (especially to the unheard), renewing practices of critical thinking, contemplation and lamentation, and by making art and music and love, by dancing and dreaming and enacting kindnesses—by planting and tending, gathering, cooking and feeding—and by cultivating affection, beauty, gratitude, desire, connection, joy, empathy, and—above all—love. Amor mundi.

It will take such ongoing rebalancing and integration, and collective empowerment to relearn how to think and to make and to do and to make do—to etch into our bodyminds new patterns of belonging and becoming-behaviors—to correct the disastrous course of the woefully misguided worldview that is, quite simply, devouring the world.

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APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Hermeneutic Play: Leaping from Appropriate to Privilege to Proprioception[157]

appropriate (adj.)

"specially suitable, **proper**," early 15c., from Latin appropriatus, past participle of appropriare (see appropriate (v.)). Related: Appropriately; appropriateness.

appropriate (v.)

early 15c., "take possession of," from Late Latin appropriatus, past participle of appropriare, adpropriare (c.450) "**to make one's own**," from Latin ad- "to" (see ad-) + propriare "take as one's own," from **proprius** "one's own" (see proper). Related: Appropriated; appropriating.

private (adj.)

late 14c., "**pertaining or belonging to oneself, not shared, individual; not open to the public**;" of a religious rule, "not shared by Christians generally, distinctive; **from Latin privatus "set apart, belonging to oneself** (not to the state), peculiar, personal," **used in contrast to publicus, communis; past participle of privare "to separate, deprive**," from privus "one's own, individual," from PIE *prei-wo-, from PIE *prai-, *prei-, from root *per- (1) "forward, through" (see per).

privilege (n.)

mid-12c. "grant, commission" (recorded earlier in Old English, but as a Latin word), from Old French privilege "right, priority, privilege" (12c.) and directly from Latin *privilegium* "law applying to one person, bill of law in favor of or against an individual," later "privilege," from **privus "individual" (see *private* (adj.)**) + lex (genitive legis) "law" (see legal (adj.)). Meaning "**advantage granted**" is from mid-14c. in English.

proper (adj.)

c.1300, "adapted to some purpose, fit, apt; commendable, excellent" (sometimes ironic), from Old French propre "own, particular; exact, neat, fitting, appropriate" (11c.), from Latin **proprius** "**one's own, particular to itself**," from pro **privo** "**for the individual, in particular**," from ablative of **privus "one's own, individual**" (see private (adj.)) + pro "for" (see pro-). Related: **Properly**. // From early 14c. as "**belonging or pertaining to oneself; individual; intrinsic**;" from mid-14c. as "pertaining to a person or thing in particular, special, specific; distinctive, characteristic;" also **"what is by the rules, correct, appropriate, acceptable."** From early 15c. as "separate, distinct; itself." Meaning "socially appropriate, decent, respectable" is first recorded 1704. Proper name "name belonging to or relating to the person or thing in question," is from late 13c., a sense also preserved in astronomical proper motion (c.1300). Proper noun is from c.1500.

property (n.)

c.1300, properte, "nature, quality," later "**possession, thing owned**" (early 14c., a sense rare before 17c.), from an Anglo-French modification of Old French propriete

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157 Sourced from Etymoline, http://www.etymonline.com/

"individuality, peculiarity; property" (12c., Modern French propreté; see propriety), from Latin proprietatem (nominative proprietas) "**ownership, a property, propriety**, quality," literally "special character" (a loan-translation of Greek idioma), noun of quality from proprius "one's own, special" (see proper). For "possessions, private property" Middle English sometimes used proper goods.

proprietary (adj.)

mid-15c., "**possessing worldly goods in excess of a cleric's needs," from Medieval Latin proprietarius "owner of property,"** noun use of Late Latin adjective proprietarius "of a property holder," from Latin **proprietas "owner"** (see property). **Meaning "held in private ownership"** is first attested 1580s. The word was used earlier in English as a noun meaning "proprietor," also "worldly person" (c.1400), from a noun use in French and Medieval Latin.

proprioception (n.)

1906, from proprioceptor, from **Latin proprius "own"** (see proper) + reception. Coined by English neurophysiologist C.S. Sherrington (1857-1952). Related: Proprioceptive; proprioceptor. ["Relating to stimuli that are produced and perceived within an organism, especially those connected with the position and movement of the body." http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/proprioceptive]

common (adj.)

c. 1300, "**belonging to all**, general," from Old French comun "**common, general, free, open, public**" (9c., Modern French commun), from **Latin communis "in common, public, shared by all or many**; general, not specific; familiar, not pretentious," from **PIE *ko-moin-i- "held in common,"** compound adjective formed from *ko- "together" + *moi-n-, suffixed form of root *mei- (1) "change, exchange" (see mutable), hence literally "shared by all." **Used disparagingly of women and criminals** since c. 1300. …

common (n.)

late 15c., "land held in common," from common (adj.). Commons "the third estate of the English people as represented in Parliament," is from late 14c. Latin **communis** also served as a noun meaning "common property, state, **commonwealth**."

community (n.)

late 14c., from **Old French comunité "community, commonness, everybody"** (Modern French communauté), from **Latin communitatem (nominative communitas)** "community, society, fellowship, friendly intercourse; courtesy, condescension, affability," **from communis "common, public, general, shared by all or many,"** (see common (adj.)). Latin communitatem "was merely a noun of quality ... meaning 'fellowship, community of relations or feelings,' but in med.L. it was, like universitas, used concretely in the sense of 'a body of fellows or fellow-townsmen' " [OED].

university (n.)

c. 1300, "institution of higher learning," also "**body of persons** constituting a university," from Anglo-French université, Old French universite "universality; **academic community**" (13c.), from **Medieval Latin universitatem (nominative universitas),**

"the whole, aggregate," in Late Latin "corporation, society," **from universus "whole, entire" (see universe).** In the academic sense, a shortening of universitas magistrorum et scholarium "community of masters and scholars"

universe (n.)

1580s, "**the whole world, cosmos, the totality of existing things,"** from Old French univers (12c.), **from Latin universum "all things, everybody, all people, the whole world,"** noun use of neuter of adjective **universus "all together, all in one, whole, entire, relating to all,"** literally "turned into one," from unus "one" (see one) + versus, past participle of vertere "to turn" (see versus).

APPENDIX C

Trustworthiness, Bias, Strengths, and Limitations

> … [A]uto-ethnographers should not defend themselves against accusations of bias, but should rather "show that there's something to be gained by saturating [their] observations with [their] own subjectivity" and to "confront the issue of bias head-on in their own writing" (2004, p. 89). This contention echoes Frankl's paraphrase of Kierkegaard that individuals should embrace their bias in the service of truth:
>
> > As long as we do not have access to absolute truth, we must be content that our relative truths correct one another, and that we find the courage to be biased. In the many-voiced orchestra...we not only have the right, but the duty to be biased as long as we are conscious of it. (2000, p. 126) (Esping, 2010, p. 211).
>
> *The pears are not seen*
> *As the observer wills.*
>
> Wallace Stevens, from Study of Two Pears
>
> Perhaps the only characteristic shared by modern hermeneutic critics is the assumption that there is an active relationship between the knower and the object of knowledge. (Raymond, 1990, p. 4)

As already discussed, I try to be attentive to the meanings and usages of words. For example, I am interested in the multilayered possibilities in the word *research*, such as Romanyshyn's interpretation of *re-search as vocation* above. Reading about research and contemplating others' thoughts about research has helped me better define and expanded the meaning of the process for myself. According to Jacobs (2008), *rechercher is* the French word for research, from the root word *'recherchier'—'parcourir en cherchant',* which means

'to travel through while searching' (p. 18). In another meaningful twist, Wiktionary gives the definition of *recherché* as "sought out with care." To think of research as a calling, of *traveling through while searching,* and *seeking out with care* implies to me genuine purpose, allurement, and ongoing process, without a fixed end.

It is in the spirit of Jacobs' "authentic dissertation" (2008), which values and engages ways of knowing, research and representation that are unorthodox, that I have tried conduct my enquiry. I think of the "authentic dissertation" as referring to work (and serious play!) that emerges from the deepest sense of integrity and purpose in and care for the world—insofar as I able to remain true to my heartmind and be courageous in the process—regardless of certain projections, judgments and politics of others, especially within the academy. The authentic dissertation springs from creative potential, which necessarily draws from and is sustained by not only the rational mind, but also embodied, emotional, intuitive, imaginal and aesthetic sensibilities. I think of my research "arising out of the specificities of epistemology and methodology rooted in survival struggles . . . designed not just to voice the voiceless but to prevent the dying—of people, of culture, of eco-systems (Lather, 2006, paraphrasing Tuhiwai Smith, p. 44). Lather strikes a chord when she says, "Academic knowledge becomes 'enemy country' through which a new kind of politics must pass on its way to a more radically democratic and less hierarchical social order" (2006, p. 44)—and I will add—ecologically sustainable order. The ways in which we imagine and conduct our research practices, teach, and make Art and theory, are always political. Being true to one's deeply discerned politics throughout the dissertation endeavor—while remaining open to becomings through, for instance, dialogic and art-informed encounters—hopefully translates as authentic work.

I have tried to keep in my awareness, borrowing from Braidotti (2006), that a scholar,

manifesting an ethics and practice of sustainability requires "visionary power or prophetic energy" which are qualities "neither especially in fashion in academic circles, nor highly valued" (p. 273). This, of course, is a tall order that I surely have not always sustained—yet to which I have aspired. If I listened closely to my conscience—to the World—I hadn't a choice but to strive.

So, as has been evident, I do not attempt to conceal the passion and urgency I feel for my topic. I am deeply concerned about the state of the Earth's bio/zoë/sphere and our human world. The profound significance of the transition from the Cenozoic to the Ecozoic era should be principally considered—beyond the now clichéd and out of touch *21st century skills*—as we grapple with what education means for a future that is highly uncertain to sustain life as we know it. I understand this strong felt connection to my topic as my principal bias—while at the same time, perhaps, my greatest strength. Though I do have strong feelings and intuitions about, as well as rational understanding of the subject from which my questions arise, I certainly do not pretend to have clear and specific answers to my core questions; but, neither do I see these important questions being asked broadly or urgently enough in the academy—again, in sum: *What does it mean to educate in a time of mass extinction?* I have aimed to include in my research and writing an exploration of my *potentia* or creative force and becoming (Braidotti, 2006)—an expression of my own affirmation of life and love and expression of grief, and a search for possible meanings by way of others who have spent their lives contemplating what it means to live in proper relationship to Others and our Earth.

A way into the future must consider—not
vanquish—the bodymind
from research and writing,

—uncover, place, claim—

becoming-a piacere

wholly at the heart.

It's messy and ugly. Beautiful.

and "(true)."

Vulnerability is not a choice, but a demand.

As an aspiring qualitative, process-relational and arts-informed researcher, it has been an honor to embrace the proximity of my subject(s). As a creator and interpreter of data, I have consciously infused myself in the subject-matter—the subject-matter has infused me—in an *intimate, living inquiry*. By embracing my subject thusly, I believe I have embodied my questions, engaged directly with the world, while interrogating and celebrating meaning (Springgay et al., 2008, p. xxix). Montuori (2010) confirms the coherence of a transdisciplinary approach to my research and my embeddedness in this enquiry: "…transdisciplinarity clearly recognizes the role of values in inquiry, rather than attempting to suppress or 'bracket' them, it engages the inquirer as an active, embodied and embedded ethical participant in the world" (p. 123). While sinking into an embodied, embedded research posture and situatedness, I have aimed for mindfulness and include claims of shadow and prejudice and historical conditioning—taking Gadamer's warning into account, that if I should ever forget these, experience surely awaits of the "violence of … prejudices that rule unchecked as a *vis a tergo* [power operating behind one's back.] (Dutt quoting Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, in conversation with Gadamer, 2001, p. 44).

By way of contemplating existing *theoria*, as well as through the *praxis* and *poïesis* of my/our enquiry, I have aimed to weave the weft of reflective narrative, poetry and art, with the warp of theory and methodology to expand the circling web of meaning and wisdom. I harbor the hope that, ultimately, this enquiry may contribute, in some small way, to changes

in perceptions of educational, scholarly and leaderly purpose and practice.

While it is easy to be pessimistic about the possibilities for meaningful change in these times—as I often am—I try to remember as I have already said, and as Thomas Berry often said, referring to Carl Jung, "The dream drives the action." O'Sullivan interprets Berry's call to dream as developing "the notion that we are not motivated and energized at the level of ideas but by the deeper recesses of dream structures" (O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 3). By taking on this topic, and what, to some, might seem the significant limitations of its scope (a paradox, indeed), I have chosen to exercise my right and duty to dream and imagine. I also try to keep in mind the late Václav Havel's sentiment concerning the nature of hope:

> [Hope]… I understand above all as a state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope in us or we don't; it is a dimension of the soul; it is not necessarily dependent on some particular observation of the world or estimation of the situation. Hope is not a prognostication. It is an orientation of spirit, an orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons. Hope … is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out. (2004, p. 82)

Another strength of this enquiry is my choice of participants, subjects I have identified whom have given much thought to education in the postmodern era, particularly in the context of ecological and social justice concerns. I see these individuals as "wise elders" in our midst; they willingly and enthusiastically entered into the spirit of this project—and into authentic dialogue and encounter.[158]

[158] Rather than editing it out from what was originally my proposal, I am giving over to a

I think I have exercised my ability to listen well, and to listen with compassion. My observation skills are fairly sharp; I am generally good at catching subtle details of an environment, body language, synchronistic and symbolic possibilities, and the emotional air. I think I am generally good at building rapport with most people—especially on a one-to-one basis, or in small groups. I am relationally and intuitively oriented (though I still have to work at overcoming a learned distrust of my knowings). I can be a decent facilitator. I like making connections, and I love to research the literature—am adept at following threads between authors, texts, disciplines, ideas and theories, and have an appreciation for the philosophic, scientific, aesthetic, political, and historic.

Also, my refusal to take a positivist position, thereby creating a delusional objectivity, is itself a strength in a qualitative researcher. I am aware of and take into account my "being there," the Dasein of Heidegger, who criticized the prevailing notion of substance. Heidegger argued that "Dasein is always a being engaged in the world. The fundamental mode of Being is not that of a subject or of the objective but of the coherence of Being-in-the-world" (Dasein, n.d; see also Heidegger, 1962, p. 78-90). I will add here that I feel strengthened by my developing sense of *becoming,* which is central to my enquiry. I like to think, then, of *Being-in-the-world* as *Becoming-in-and-with-the-world*.

Finally, I am a tenacious wrestler with despair…. "Wisdom comes from wrestling with despair and not allowing despair to have the last word." ~ Cornell West

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footnote a statement, which, in retrospect, I read with interest, as it foreshadows the research encounter from which I have drawn much of the data revealed in this document: "I have a dream of gathering these elders in one place and to witness an emergent dialogue among them about these issues."

APPENDIX D

A Paradigm Map for Process-Relational Philosophy…in Process

> *[P]aradigm mapping can help us recognize both our longing for and a wariness of an ontological and epistemological home. The task is how to diagram the becoming of history against the limits of our conceptual frameworks that are so much about what we have already ceased to be. Such charts become abstract machines, provisional and schematic, designed to move us to some place where oppositions dissolve through the very thinking they have facilitated.* (Lather, 2006, p. 40)

Modeled after Paul (2005), and *longing for, with wariness, an ontological and epistemological home,* the following table reflects my initial (and on-going) attempt to create a (partial) paradigm map of the philosophical framework of this dissertation.

	Process-relational philosophy
Ontology/Cosmology	Emphasis on *becoming* rather than static existence or being (to which ontology generally refers); process; process nature of reality; reality as experiential events rather than enduring inert substances; cosmogenesis; immanence; creativity as universal. *Heraclitean* rather than *Parmenidean.*
Epistemology	Both objective and subjective, relational, intuition not excluded, pluralistic, multiplicity of truths, awareness of complexity and systems, includes the nonlocal, embodied and embedded. Rhizomatic. "There are no whole truths; all truths are half-truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truths that play the devil." –Whitehead
Methodology	The postmodern hermeneutic circle: dialogic*, transdisciplinary,* co-creative, arts-informed, open to mystery. Acknowledges both speculation and empirical verification.

APPENDIX E

Further Thoughts on Moral Injury and Leadership

Circulating in the literature on psychological trauma, Jonathan Shay (2014) introduced this relatively new—or renewed—concept, moral injury. A concept he derived from his reading of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (p. 183), moral injury (n.d.) is normally applied to:

> military veterans who have witnessed or perpetrated a morally transgressive act in combat. ...[and]... refers to an injury to ... moral conscience resulting from an act of moral transgression. ... The concept of moral injury emphasizes the psychological, cultural, and spiritual aspects of trauma. Distinct from pathology, moral injury is a normal human response to an abnormal event (para. 1).

According to Shay's (2014) definition, narrowed to the context of military examples, moral injury is present when there has been (1) "a betrayal of what is right"; (2) "by someone who holds legitimate authority" (a leader); and (3) "in a high stakes situation" (p. 183). Consider: "a betrayal of what is right" (right, as in living in "right relationship"); "by someone who holds legitimate authority" (the majority of our "leaders," however the term "legitimate" might hold); and (3) "in a high stakes situation" (as in multiple cascading crises, including mass species extinction and climate catastrophe on a global scale).

Interestingly, and worth further consideration in light of later proposals for in/appropriate leadership, Shay has conceived of "leadership malpractice," as one source of moral injury (p. 185). I want to go beyond the malpractice of individual leaders to also consider systems malpractice. It is in dominant and dominating economic systems (neoliberal-capitalism, and state capitalism) and the militaries that maintain these systems—not *necessarily* individual leaders—that propagates the most severe moral injury. By way of

intractable human political, economic and social systems we are largely required to live in ways that violate, for many, "ideals, ethics, or attachments" (p. 184)—violations that, according to Shay, lead to moral injury. *Potestas* (coercive power) promotes moral injury, which in turn entrenches negative passions and further *potestas,* if not corrected and healed. Beyond mere addendum in a dissertation, and for another day, the concepts of moral injury and leadership malpractice are yet other entangled lines of flight to be further theorized, in the context of education in a time of mass extinction.

APPENDIX F

Research Encounter: Schedule for Day

Outline of Schedule - *a necessary but counterintuitive plan, concerning time and liminality*

8:30 - 9:30	Setting the room	Flowers, candles, round rug/fabric/mandala Materials, music, mats pillows, tech/cameras
10:00 - 10:30	Gather, coffee	
10:30 - 11:15	Introductions	Bell, poem Introduce myself/work, EXA/Ed, assistants Confidentiality, Consent forms, Breaks Give out notebooks, pens Explain structure of day, *orenda*, dialogue Choose animal cards, a few moments with via introductions share symbols and cards
11:15 - 12:30	Make masks	Explain process (Katrina) Silence except for information Mindfulness > masker and maskee Reflect in journals Sea waves or whales audio
12:30– 1:15	Lunch break	Quiet reflection and conversation (Hair dry masks)
1:15 – 2:45	Embellish masks	Introduce materials
2:45 – 5:00	Dialogue/Mandala	Play of Silence. Questions. Dialogue. *Orenda*. Move dialogue from art process to thoughts and feeling re retirement and refocus in the context of critical cultural and ecological times. What is the question that arises out of my deepest feeling? Which question/s of our critical times do I connect with out of my own experience of transition?
6:30 – 9:00…	Dinner	Ritual meal, communitas, honor, hope

APPENDIX G

Participant Introductions on Ghost Gestures

The following pages contain Professors' introductions as poetically transcribed on the *ghost gestures* they chose, or who chose them. The images are ordered according to the sun-wise circle in which participants placed themselves.

I've been a collector

of fetishes
since I was five
I was so terribly shy—

in kindergarten.

I didn't speak— was

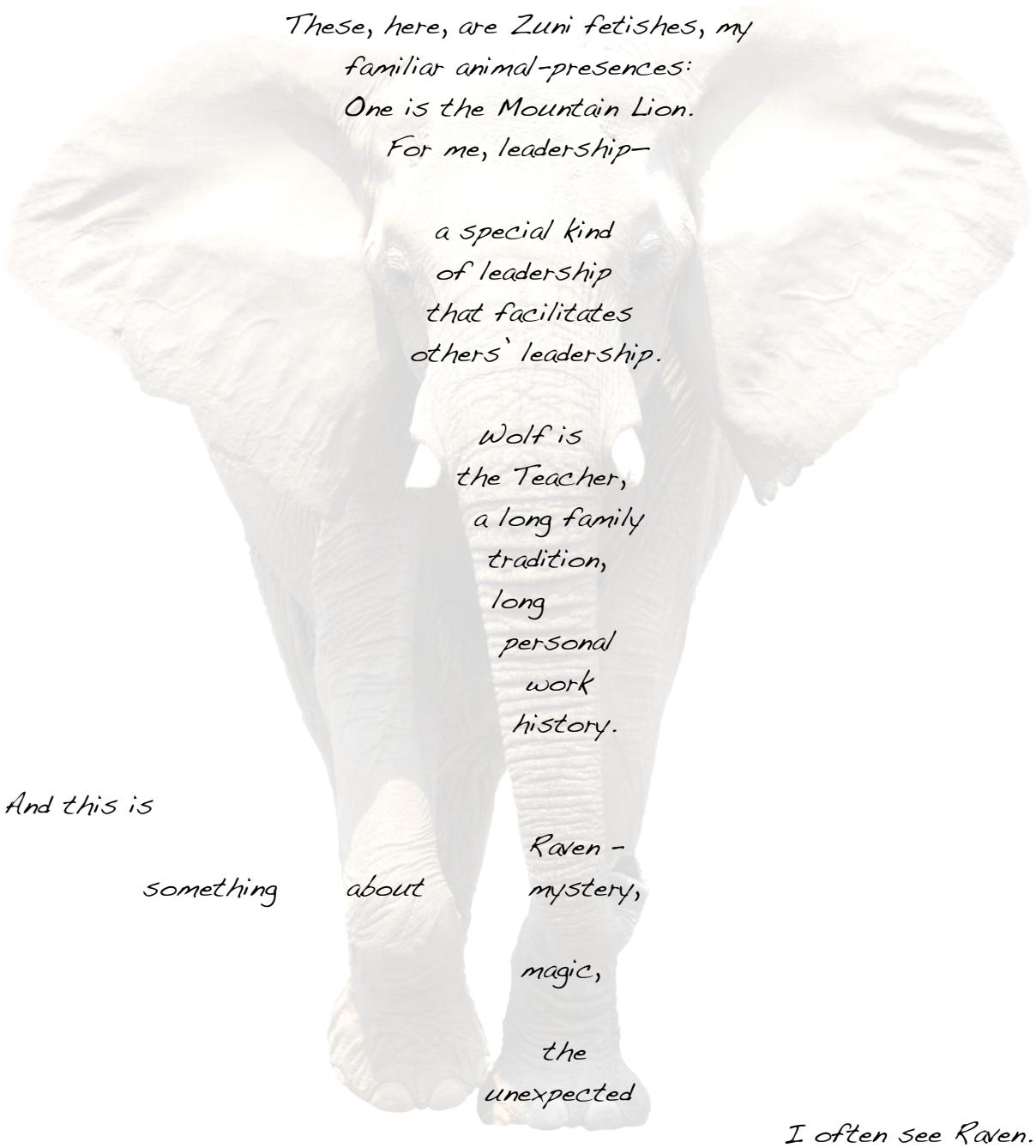
scared
all the time.

I carried
my first fetish
a little blue
plastic lion
from a
Cracker
Jack's
box.

I carried it

in my
pocket,
rubbed it
to comfort
myself.

(Elephant takes,
one by one,
small figures from
the skin-parcel
in her hands.)



These, here, are Zuni fetishes, my
familiar animal-presences:
One is the Mountain Lion.
For me, leadership—

a special kind
of leadership
that facilitates
others' leadership.

Wolf is
the Teacher,
a long family
tradition,
long
personal
work
history.

And this is

Raven -
something about mystery,

magic,

the
unexpected

I often see Raven.

I did this morning, first thing.
S/he comes alone, a kind of a messenger – says,
"Stay present, pay attention."

Whooping
Crane 2

My other
object
is a poem
- a response to an invitation -
my last lecture -
a poem based on a form
that was used by one
of my students, a Credo: I believe.
It gave me a chance to reflect
on all the things I believe in and care about.
So the two together -
my battered old
bird book and Credo - a poem -
fairly well
speak to things that I care -
care most about -
have been most important
to me in my life.

[Silence]

Whooping
Crane 3

Birds -
when I heard
they found the
ivory billed woodpecker -
When I heard
it had been found,
I cried.

It - it was such...
an amazing thing.

The fact that they haven't been able
to find the ivory bill again is really
very sad to me.

I will add these to
our list.

[Silence]

I intended to bring a rose quartz,
a stone that I carry with me.

I bring it places
when I need some special connection.
I left it at home.
I didn't bring it here.

Rose quartz symbolizes living
from the
heart.
I've spent time
cherishing
- wanting to live
fully
that way through my teaching,
in my relationships with others
that's a very important piece.

What I also brought
from my own possession - this
cell
phone -
In terms of my life's work
it has to do with
the challenges of the
new world.
I'm not a techno person.
I don't have any
apps. [Laughter]

So this is just a phone.

But it also represents a steep learning curve.

The learning curve...

I have also cherished

throughout

my life

– an active,

curious,

important way

of continuing

to learn,

continuing

to know,

continuing through

teaching,

through

learning,

through

arts,

through

dreams,

through many

ways...

I have tried to interface

with loved ones

and the people around me.

In the painted card, you see...
I cheated, I pulled

Things that have been
in creating -

This button is from

at Duke.
It was for me an

- it was a huge
to both

and to

the responsibility

important
contributions to-

The Vigil

1968

awakening

movement

awakening
issues

the things we must all do -

for social justice

Tiger Symbols: 1

four different symbols -

my whole academic journey.

a big civil rights
demonstration

a civil rights
event,

involved

we must all take on.

Another button says,

"I support anthropology
in the South"

[Laughter]

The Vigil led me to becoming
an anthropologist.

Here were people
who helped
explain
the dynamics of
class
race
gender
- theorists
in anthropology.
to help

Anthropology became my tool
to interpret
the world
around us,
the oppressions
around us.

Symbol 3 & 4

Here is Mr. Mao.

Chairman Mao –

symbolizes

the journey that took me to Asia –

to Asia and my family

China is

an important presence

in my life,

and continues...

my daughter is there now.

And here is "the New River

Like It Is."

My writing... speaking ...publishing now

is focused

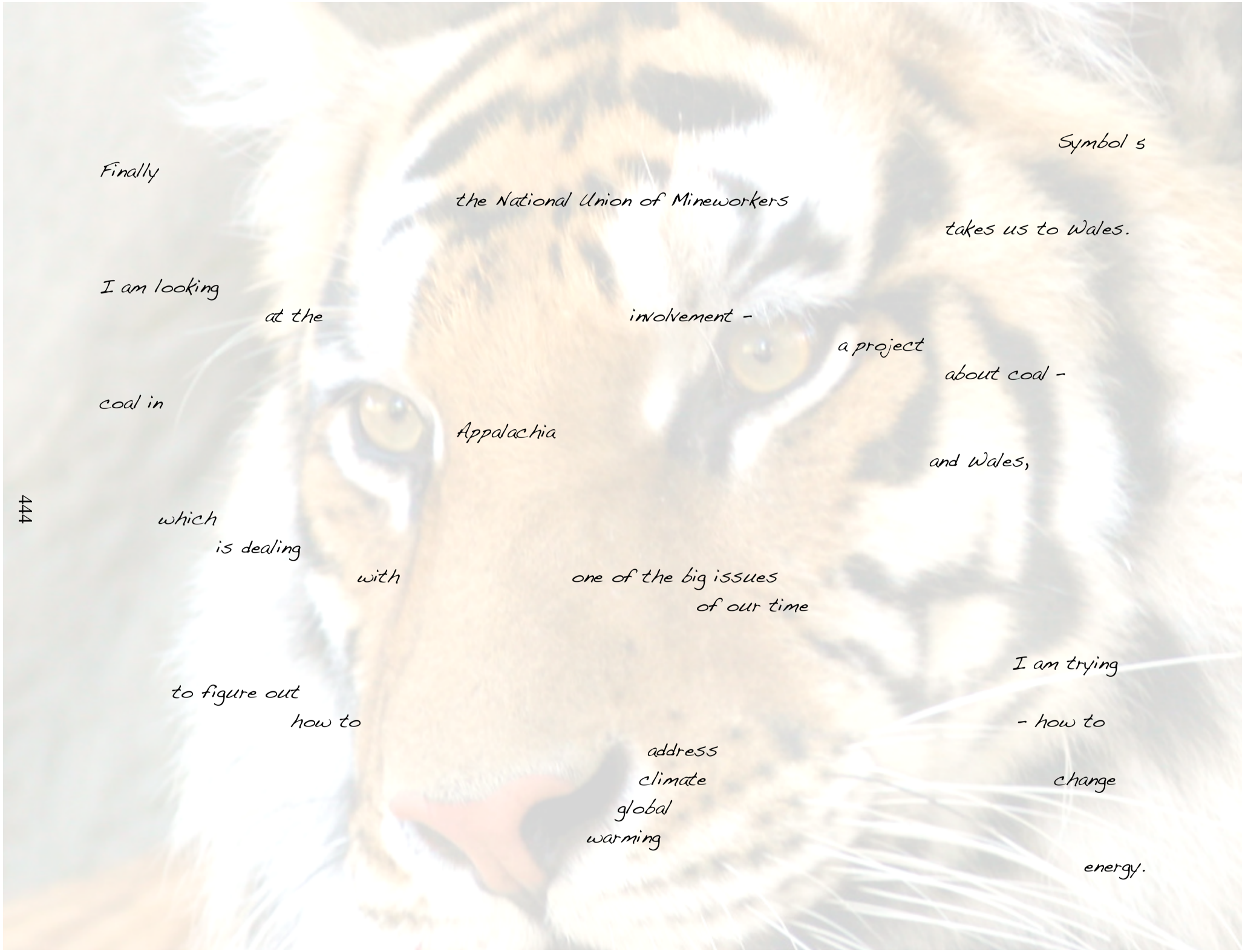
on the New

River–

the future of

the New

River.



Symbol s

Finally

the National Union of Mineworkers

takes us to Wales.

I am looking

at the involvement -

a project

about coal -

coal in

Appalachia

and Wales,

which

is dealing

with one of the big issues

of our time

I am trying

to figure out

how to - how to

address

climate change

global

warming

energy.

When I was

four

my grandmother

gave

me a first

gift –

a little

turtle bracelet.

I saw a baby

loggerhead

just

last

summer

all by

itself

on the beach.

Awe!

I put gloves on

and picked it up.

It was not with a

nest

or anything.

I just

love

loggerhead

turtles.

Turtle's been a part of my

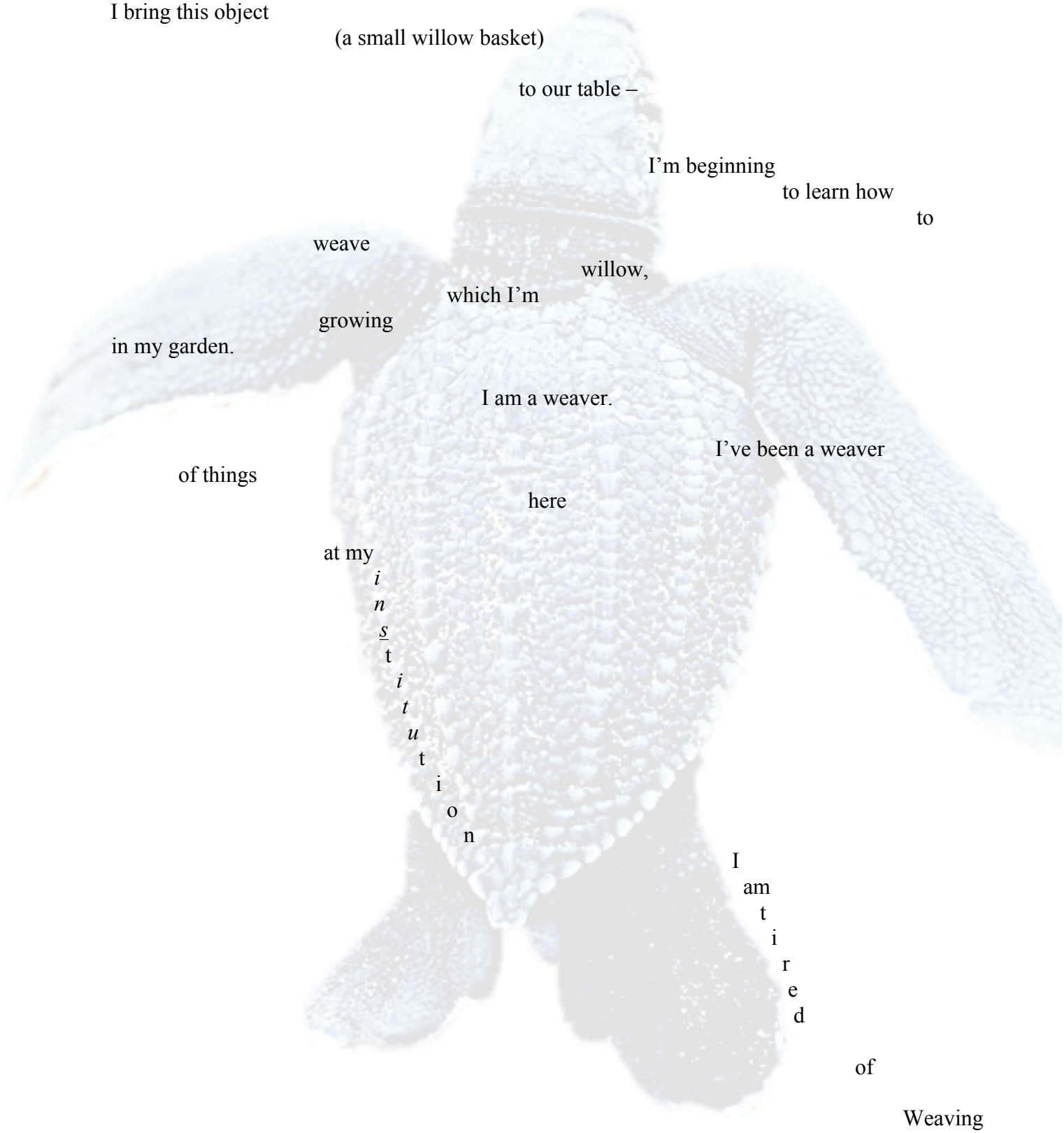
Psyche

part of my physical

life.

Turtles my whole life.

Loggerhead Two



I bring this object
(a small willow basket)
to our table –
I'm beginning
to learn how
to
weave
willow,
which I'm
growing
in my garden.

I am a weaver.

I've been a weaver
of things
here
at my
i
n
s
t
i
t
u
t
i
o
n
I
am
t
i
r
e
d
of
Weaving
now
at the

i
n
s
t
i
t
u
t
i
o
n…
s
h
u
n
I don’t know
what’s
ahead,
but I’ll
continue
to work
weaving
things
from
the earth,
weave
the earth.
I even put
shells
in my basket
this morning
– so I’ll just put
Turtle
here.
The two
are going together
very well.

Vulture's Symbol

This is my favorite type of horn mute, which some people use for other purposes - [Laughter] You can shape sounds with it.

And you can get these at - at Walmart. two for five dollars. They come with a little plastic handle.

And plastic seems to be a big part of my life.

I seem to be able to hear because of plastic and nickel cadmium.

And - and I love all of these earth people.

I hang out with them.

And I love all that, but - I used to spend time on a farm of my uncle and aunt and I hated every minute of it.

It's really hard work!

There's a lot of shit and stuff.

[Laughter]

And so I know that I must just be a Vulture.

[Laughter]

Anyway, I'd like to

ask your

forgiveness for that

bear with me.

I also want to say that when

I play the horn,

and - and - and

stuff comes out the end

of the bell, this seems

really appropriate

to catch it. And - and shape it,

in many ways

[Laughter]

Moccasin Flower: " I thought that was the end of a plunger."

Exactly.

[Laughter]

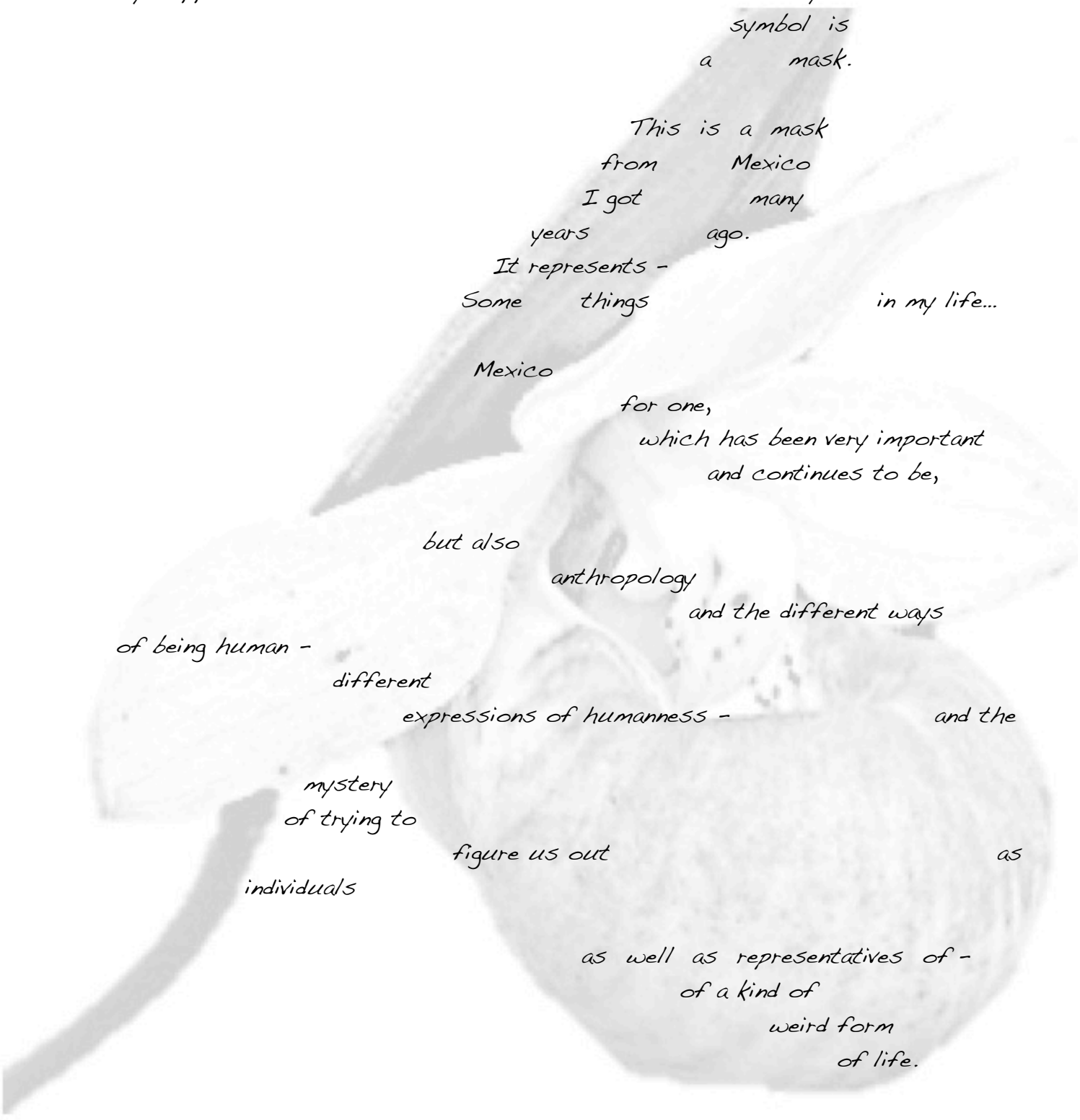
It - it works - it works great at catching...

Moccasin Flower: " ...all kinds of good stuff..."

Like shit.

[Laughter]

I love it.



Lady Slipper 3

My
symbol is
a mask.

This is a mask
from Mexico
I got many
years ago.
It represents -
Some things in my life...

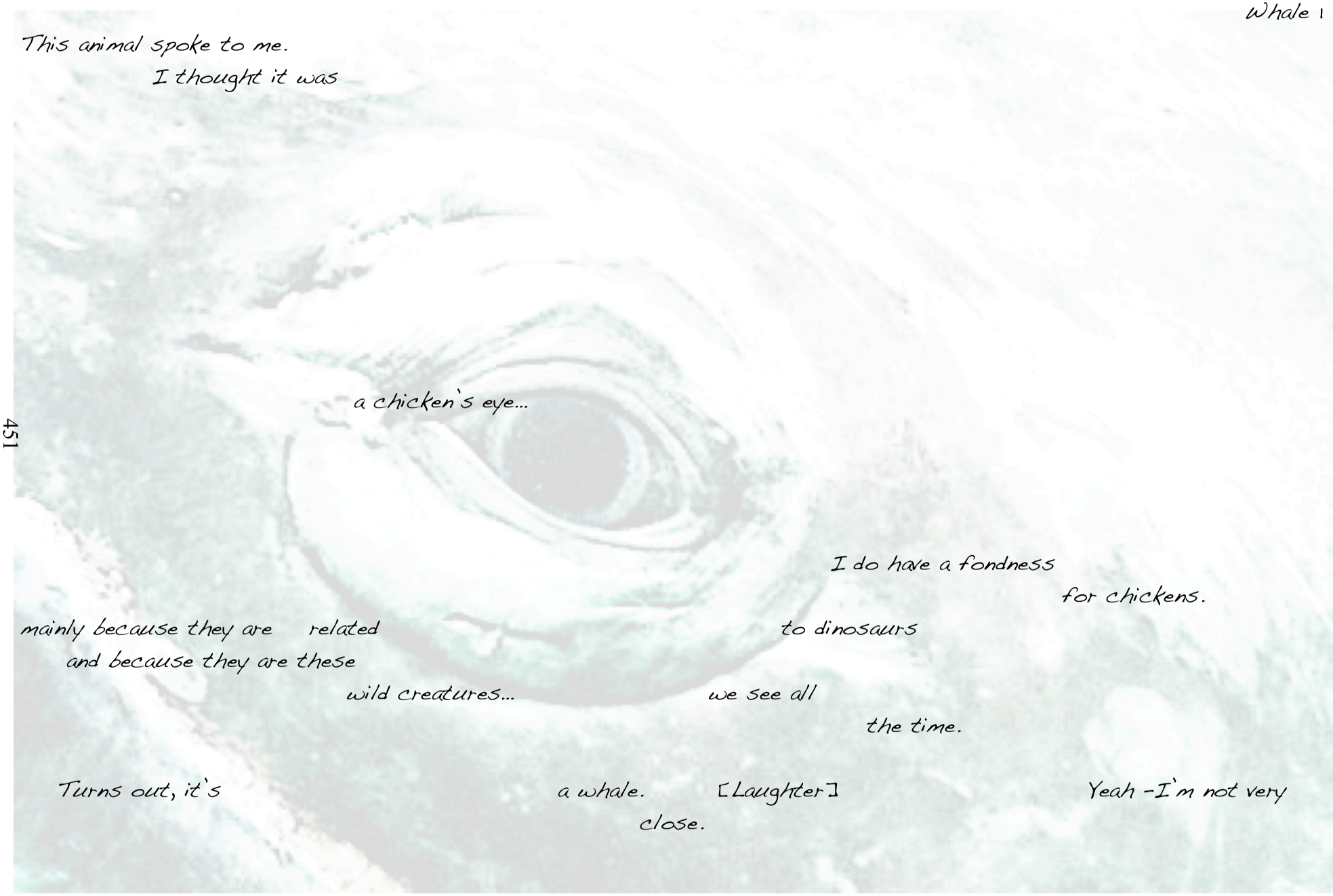
Mexico
for one,
which has been very important
and continues to be,

but also
anthropology
and the different ways
of being human -
different
expressions of humanness - and the

mystery
of trying to
figure us out as
individuals

as well as representatives of -
of a kind of
weird form
of life.

So that's me.


This animal spoke to me.
I thought it was
a chicken's eye...
I do have a fondness
for chickens.
mainly because they are related
to dinosaurs
and because they are these
wild creatures...
we see all
the time.
Turns out, it's
a whale.
[Laughter]
Yeah -I'm not very
close.

I want to take this opportunity
to tell about the
Japanese farmer's coat I am wearing with
butterflies on its sleeves -
the butterfly,
my endangered animal.

The coat is quite old, from Japan, worn by
gardener women.

It was given to me a very long time ago
by a relative, she shared with me
its history.

She sewed butterflies
on sleeves, a gift to me in the 1980s.

I've worn
it all over the world -
have slept in it,
used it for cover.

When I was in Dubrovnik
for an international women's
studies conference
(late 80s, still Yugoslavia
before the break-up
and the horrific wars)

I was waiting in Dubrovnik
Airport - a Japanese woman came to me,
recognizing
the coat
from her country.

Monarch 3 -Symbol

My
Scarf
from Iceland

says,
Samtök um kvennalista,
meaning ' Women's List."

The symbol of Samtök um kvennalista
an academic tassel.
[Laughter]

I have been - I'm a part of the
second wave of feminism, that really
ancient group
now. Some of you
also are part
of that.

Most of the kinds
of work I have done for -
Oh, if this scarf
could speak...

2014 is my fiftieth year
in academia.

I started teaching
in 1964 at a university
near the Great Lakes.

And so, coming back again
this year
I try to save
the program
I founded, I nurtured
- in the midst of

everything...

I saw these
hands.
They look
like the hands of
a woman. Her
three boys had been killed
in six months
by U.S. Contras.
Henri Nouwen
the radical Christian
theologian was with us, said–
"This mother doesn't want us to weep,
she wants us to do something –
all of us do something!
Stand up!"
I think about that today
in our current struggles
in this state and in the local –
in our institution
we all seem to maintain this love-
hate relationship
and so I have lots of feeling
for this
Nahuat.

This is the best symbol (colorful ikat pouch for glasses)
because I've had this forever.

My students think
it's where I carry my secrets,
and I don't disabuse them of that.
Let's leave some mystery
in our classes.

[Laughter]

I like it because –
it is of this world–
very much created by Guatemalan peasants,
but also a re-created thing –from imposed colonial patterns
of the Spanish.
Now commercialized –
it's become a commodity,
made by indigenous hands
– a crazy hybrid
both indigenous and just something to sell
to make some money That's what

peasants
do.

Appendix H

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Vita

North Carolina born in 1958 to Tully and Frances Joyner Reed, Susan F. Reed was raised with two sisters and a brother in the world's oldest mountains, the Appalachians. Graduating *magna cum laude,* she received a B.A. from Appalachian State University, where she majored in Interdisciplinary Studies (emphasis cross-cultural studies and ethnomusicology), and minored in Women's Studies. She earned an M.A. in culture and spirituality from Holy Names University (CA), and a post-graduate certificate in expressive arts from ASU. She embodies a deep rootedness in place, while also being a global thinker and actor. She is a dual citizen (USA and IE/EU—via marriage to an Irish national, Frankie Kelly); they have two children, ages 16 and 20.

Susan believes in the value and importance of epistemological diversity, and is interested in the collaborative search for new language and symbols with which to understand and express the human and more-than-human conditions in our fragmented, rapidly changing world. She is drawn to educational and organizational models and decision-making methods based on systems and process-relational thinking.

Her philosophy of leadership closely mirrors her philosophy of education. She knows the power of collaboration, experimentation, and co-creativity, and the importance of transparency and resiliency. Susan a systems thinker, with an eye for both detail and "patterns that connect." She listens and manages conflict well, and is collegial, caring, and responsible—known for her commitment, integrity, and perseverance through adversity.

Practically, Susan has broad work experience, including organizational and program development in areas such as education, politics, conservation, sustainability, and women's studies. She has often worked at the margins of formal institutions, including internationally, as a cultural worker, and social, political and environmental activist-educator and organizer. Peace and social justice, and environmental and economic justice movements have shaped her worldview, and work and lifestyle choices. The Arts have both informed her understanding of the world, and served as an important avenue for expressing her work in the world.